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**THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH**



THE  
**Poetical Works**  
OF  
WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

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THE EXCURSION  
THE RECLUSE  
PART I BOOK I

---

Edited from the manuscripts  
with  
textual and critical notes  
by  
E. DE SELINCOURT  
and  
HELEN DARBISHIRE

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## PREFACE

THIS last volume of the collected Works contains *The Excursion*; *The Recluse*, Part I, Book I (in Appendix A); some interesting early passages of blank verse written when Wordsworth was contemplating *The Recluse* (in Appendix B); and *The Tuft of Primroses*, a long desultory poem, from which some lines were lifted into *The Excursion* (in Appendix C). In the notes at the end of the volume will be found some other passages written, but discarded, for *The Excursion*, notably those on the Shepherd of Bield Crag, pp. 461–2, on the life of the Peasant-boy, pp. 432–41, and on the death of the old Woodman, p. 466.

I have added, p. 362, a fragment of a poem on Milton recently discovered.

From a study of the manuscripts I have been able to trace, at any rate in outline, the chronology of the composition of *The Excursion*, and to throw some light on its genesis.

In printing Wordsworth's final text of *The Excursion* from the edition of 1850 I have made a few corrections: I follow Knight and Nowell C. Smith at iii. 617, v. 378 and 679, ix. 679, and Nowell C. Smith at ii. 398 and v. 529; with the support of the poet's manuscripts I have myself corrected *burnt* to *burned* at iii. 744, *borne* to *held* at vii. 343, and I have restored a missing line at iv. 1272.

At the end of the volume I have appended a list of Corrigenda and Addenda for the preceding volumes, and a comprehensive index, applying to all five volumes.

I am indebted for information on many points of local history to Mrs. Rawnsley of Allan Bank, an unrivalled authority on old Grasmere; and to Mr. Roger Coxon for the revelation of the true identity of 'the ingenuous poet', John Edwards, quoted by Wordsworth in his *Essay on Epitaphs* (v. p. 449 *infra*).

H. D.

GRASMERE,  
March 1949

## TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS, ETC., USED IN THE *APPARATUS CRITICUS* AND NOTES

W. or W. W. William Wordsworth.

D. W. Dorothy Wordsworth.

Dora W. Dora Wordsworth.

M. H. or M. W. Mary Wordsworth.

G. G. W. George Gordon Wordsworth, grandson of the poet.

S. H. Sara Hutchinson.

H. C. R. Henry Crabb Robinson.

*M.* *Memoirs of W. W.*, by Christopher Wordsworth.

*E.L.* *The Early Letters of W. W. and D. W.* Oxford, 1935.

*M.Y.* *The Letters of W. W. and D. W. Middle Years* (1806-20),  
2 vols. Oxford, 1937.

*L.Y.* *The Letters of W. W. and D. W. Later Years* (1821-50), 3 vols.  
Oxford, 1939.

*C.R.* *The Correspondence of Henry Crabb Robinson with the  
Wordsworth Circle*, ed. Edith J. Morley, 1927.

I. F. The notes indicated by W. W. to Isabella Fenwick in 1843.

W. Notes by Wordsworth in the printed editions.

*O.E.D.* *The Oxford English Dictionary*.

1815, 1820, first and second editions of *The Excursion*.

1820, 1827, &c. Collective editions of W. W.'s *Poetical Works* in which  
*The Excursion* was included.

*Prel.*, E. de S. *The Prelude*, edited from the manuscripts by Ernest de  
Selincourt, 1932.

*Prel.* 1805, the text printed by E. de S. in the above volume.

K. Professor William Knight, editor of W. W.'s *Poetical Works*,  
8 vols. 1896.

Dowden. Professor Edward Dowden, editor of W. W.'s *Poetical  
Works*, 7 vols. 1892-3.

Hutchinson. Mr. Thomas Hutchinson, editor of the Oxford Words-  
worth, the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), 1898, and the *Poems in Two  
Volumes* (1807), 1897.

Griggs. Unpublished Letters of S. T. Coleridge, edited by Earl  
Leslie Griggs, 2 vols. 1932.

C. A copy of W. W.'s *Poetical Works*, 1836-7, now in the Royal Library  
at Windsor, formerly in the possession of Lord Coleridge, used by  
W. for correction and re-drafting of his text.

Q. A copy of *The Excursion*, 1814, first issue, with leaves afterwards  
cancelled, and manuscript corrections, presented by John Words-  
worth, grandson of the poet, to the library of Queen's College,  
Oxford.

*Manuscripts in Dove Cottage*

*Alf.* MS. A note-book used by W. at Alfoxden between 20 Jan. and 5 March 1798, *v. Prel.*, E. de S., p. xxi.

*Christabel* MS. A note-book used by D. W. to copy poems, and by W. for composition and fair copies: the first entries 1797-8, the last 1800.

MS. 18A. A similar note-book of D. W.'s containing many of the same poems, and also a version of *The Ruined Cottage*, MS. D, *v.* p. 404 *infra*.

MS. 1800. MS. B of *Recluse*, *v.* p. 475 *infra*.

MSS. X and Y. Manuscripts containing portions of *Prelude* and *Excursion*, *v. Prel.*, E. de S., pp. xxiii, xxiv.

MS. R. A copy of Coleridge's *Poems*, 1796, containing rough drafts by W. (opposite to *Religious Musings*) of passages afterwards incorporated in *The Recluse* and *The Excursion*.

MS. M. A manuscript of *Poems*, probably transcribed in March 1804, containing a draft of *The Ruined Cottage* (*Excursion*, Book I), *v. Prel.*, E. de S., p. xx.

MS. P. A small note-book containing fair copy of *Exc.* I, II, part of III, and a rough draft of the rest.

MS. 58. A small note-book containing rough drafts of most of *Exc.* IV, and some of II and V.

MS. 60. A note-book containing drafts of passages for *Exc.* III, IV, VI, and IX.

MS. 61. A note-book containing a fair copy of *Exc.* V and rough drafts of passages from V, VI, VII, VIII, and IX.

MS. 62. A manuscript containing drafts of stray passages from V, VI, VII, VIII, and IX.

*T. of P.* *The Tuft of Primroses v.* Appendix C and note p. 482.

MS. 1, MS. 2, &c., in *Apparatus Criticus* indicate variants from first draft, second draft, &c., of the particular manuscript text.

[ ] indicates a word or words missing from the manuscript.

Words enclosed in [ ] represent a reading from another manuscript or printed text: words enclosed in ( ) a reading from the same manuscript.

17/18 lines found in a manuscript or printed text between line 17 and line 18.

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# THE EXCURSION<sup>1</sup>

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
WILLIAM, EARL OF LONSDALE, K.G.,  
ETC., ETC.

OFF, through thy fair domains, illustrious Peer!  
In youth I roamed, on youthful pleasures bent;  
And mused in rocky cell or sylvan tent,  
Beside swift-flowing Lowther's current clear.  
—Now, by thy care befriended, I appear  
Before thee, LONSDALE, and this Work present,  
A token (may it prove a monument!)  
Of high respect and gratitude sincere.  
Gladly would I have waited till my task  
Had reached its close; but Life is insecure,  
And Hope full oft fallacious as a dream:  
Therefore, for what is here produced, I ask  
Thy favour; trusting that thou wilt not deem  
The offering, though imperfect, premature.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

RYDAL MOUNT, WESTMORELAND,  
July 29, 1814.

## PREFACE TO THE EDITION OF 1814

THE Title-page announces that this is only a portion of a poem; and the Reader must be here apprised that it belongs to the second part of a long and laborious Work, which is to consist of three parts.—The Author will candidly acknowledge that, if the first of these had been completed, and in such a manner as to satisfy his own mind, he should have preferred the natural order of publication, and have given that to the world first; but, as the second division of the Work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem; and as this part does not depend upon the preceding, to a degree which will materially injure its own peculiar interest, the Author, complying with the earnest entreaties of some valued Friends, presents the following pages to the Public.

It may be proper to state whence the poem, of which *The Excursion* is a part, derives its Title of *THE RECLUSE*.—Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being

<sup>1</sup> *THE EXCURSION*] 1814 *adds* BEING A PORTION OF THE RECLUSE,  
*A Poem. so* 1820–32

enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation, he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers, as far as he was acquainted with them. That Work, addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the Author's Intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished; and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society; and to be entitled, *The Recluse*; as having for its principal subject the sensations and opinions of a poet living in retirement.—The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the Author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself; and the two Works have the same kind of relation to each other, if he may so express himself, as the ante-chapel has to the body of a gothic church. Continuing this allusion, he may be permitted to add, that his minor Pieces, which have been long before the Public, when they shall be properly arranged, will be found by the attentive Reader to have such connection with the main Work as may give them claim to be likened to the little cells, oratories, and sepulchral recesses, ordinarily included in those edifices.

The Author would not have deemed himself justified in saying, upon this occasion, so much of performances either unfinished, or unpublished, if he had not thought that the labour bestowed by him upon what he has heretofore and now laid before the Public, entitled him to candid attention for such a statement as he thinks necessary to throw light upon his endeavours to please and, he would hope, to benefit his countrymen.—Nothing further need be added, than that the first and third parts of *The Recluse* will consist chiefly of meditations in the Author's own person; and that in the intermediate part (*The Excursion*) the intervention of characters speaking is employed, and something of a dramatic form adopted.

It is not the Author's intention formally to announce a system: it was more animating to him to proceed in a different course; and if he shall succeed in conveying to the mind clear thoughts, lively images, and strong feelings, the Reader will have no difficulty in extracting the system for himself. And in the meantime the following passage, taken from the conclusion of the first book of *The Recluse*, may be acceptable as a kind of *Prospectus* of the design and scope of the whole Poem.

“On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life,  
 Musing in solitude, I oft perceive  
 Fair trains of imagery before me rise,  
 Accompanied by feelings of delight  
 Pure, or with no unpleasing sadness mixed; 5  
 And I am conscious of affecting thoughts  
 And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes  
 Or elevates the Mind, intent to weigh  
 The good and evil of our mortal state.  
 —To these emotions, whencesoe’er they come, 10  
 Whether from breath of outward circumstance,  
 Or from the Soul—an impulse to herself—  
 I would give utterance in numerous verse.  
 Of Truth, of Grandeur, Beauty, Love, and Hope,  
 And melancholy Fear subdued by Faith; 15  
 Of blessèd consolations in distress;  
 Of moral strength, and intellectual Power;  
 Of joy in widest commonalty spread;  
 Of the individual Mind that keeps her own  
 Inviolatè retirement, subject there 20  
 To Conscience only, and the law supreme  
 Of that Intelligence which governs all—  
 I sing:—‘fit audience let me find though few!’

“So prayed, more gaining than he asked, the Bard—  
 In holiest mood. Urania, I shall need 25  
 Thy guidance, or a greater Muse, if such  
 Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven!  
 For I must tread on shadowy ground, must sink  
 Deep—and, aloft ascending, breathe in worlds  
 To which the heaven of heavens is but a veil. 30  
 All strength—all terror, single or in bands,  
 That ever was put forth in personal form—

2-13 Thinking in solitude, from time to time  
 I find sweet passions traversing my soul  
 Like music: unto these where’er I may  
 I would give etc. MS. 1: *so* MS. 2 *corr. but* (2, 3) I often feel Delightful  
 passions

14/15 Hope for this earth, and hope beyond the grave MS. 2 15-17  
*not in* MS. 1 15 *not in* MS. 2 17 Of virtue and of MS. 2 18  
 widest] various MS. 1

20-2 and consists

With being limitless, the one great Life MSS. 1, 2

24-5 Fit audience find though few! Thus pray’d the Bard,

Holiest of Men MSS. 1, 2: 1814 *as text*, but Holiest of Men

29 Deep, and ascend aloft, and [ ] worlds MS. 1 32 by per-  
 sonal Form MS. 1: in personal forms MS. 2

- Jehovah—with his thunder, and the choir  
 Of shouting Angels, and the empyreal thrones—  
 I pass them unalarmed. Not Chaos, not 35  
 The darkest pit of lowest Erebus,  
 Nor aught of blinder vacancy, scooped out  
 By help of dreams—can breed such fear and awe  
 As fall upon us often when we look  
 Into our Minds, into the Mind of Man— 40  
 My haunt, and the main region of my song.  
 —Beauty—a living Presence of the earth,  
 Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms  
 Which craft of delicate Spirits hath composed  
 From earth's materials—waits upon my steps; 45  
 Pitches her tents before me as I move,  
 An hourly neighbour. Paradise, and groves  
 Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old  
 Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be  
 A history only of departed things, 50  
 Or a mere fiction of what never was?  
 For the discerning intellect of Man,  
 When wedded to this goodly universe  
 In love and holy passion, shall find these  
 A simple produce of the common day. 55  
 —I, long before the blissful hour arrives,  
 Would chant, in lonely peace, the spousal verse
- 35-6 The darkest pit  
 Of the profoundest Hell, night, chaos, death MS. 1  
 39 Us . . . we] me . . . I MS. 1 40 Into my soul, into the soul of man  
 MS. 1  
 42-4 Beauty, whose living home is the green earth  
 Surpassing far what hath by special craft  
 Of delicate Poets, been call'd forth, and shap'd MS. 1  
 47 An] My MS. 1  
 48-76 Elysian, blessed island[s] in the deep  
 Of choice seclusion, wherefore need they be  
 A history, or but a dream when minds  
 Once wedded to this outward frame of things  
 In love, find these the growth of common day.  
 Such pleasant haunts foregoing if my Song  
 Must turn elsewhere and travel near the tribes  
 And Fellowships of men, and see ill sights  
 Of passions ravenous from each other's rage,  
 Insult and injury and wrong and strife  
 Must hear *etc.* MS. 1  
 48-9 Elysian, fortunate fields, islands like those  
 In the deep Ocean, wherefore MS. 2  
 50-5 MS. 2 as MS. 1 56 MS. 2 as text but blessed 57 Would sing  
 in solitude MS. 2

Of this great consummation:—and, by words  
Which speak of nothing more than what we are,  
Would I arouse the sensual from their sleep 60  
Of Death, and win the vacant and the vain  
To noble raptures; while my voice proclaims  
How exquisitely the individual Mind  
(And the progressive powers perhaps no less  
Of the whole species) to the external World 65  
Is fitted:—and how exquisitely, too—  
Theme this but little heard of among men—  
The external World is fitted to the Mind;  
And the creation (by no lower name  
Can it be called) which they with blended might 70  
Accomplish:—this is our high argument.  
—Such grateful haunts foregoing, if I oft  
Must turn elsewhere—to travel near the tribes  
And fellowships of men, and see ill sights  
Of madding passions mutually inflamed; 75  
Must hear Humanity in fields and groves  
Pipe solitary anguish; or must hang  
Brooding above the fierce confederate storm  
Of sorrow, barricadoed evermore  
Within the walls of cities—may these sounds 80  
Have their authentic comment; that even these  
Hearing, I be not downcast or forlorn!—  
Descend, prophetic Spirit! that inspir’st  
The human Soul of universal earth,  
Dreaming on things to come; and dost possess 85  
A metropolitan temple in the hearts  
Of mighty Poets: upon me bestow

58–63 would proclaim

Speaking of nothing more than what we are

How exquisitely *etc.* MS. 2

64–76 MS. 2 *as text* but 71 *my great* for our high, and 75 *as* MS. 1 *v. app.*  
*crit.* 48–76

80–6 to these sounds

Let me find meaning more akin to that

Which to God’s ear they carry, that even these

Hearing, I be not heartless or forlorn.

Come thou, prophetic Spirit, soul of Man

Thou human Soul of the wide earth, that hast

Thy metropolitan *etc.* MS. 1: *so* MS. 2 *but* May these sounds . . .

Hearing *as text*

83 Descend] Come thou 1814

87–94 unto me vouchsafe

Thy foresight, teach me to discern and part

Inherent things from casual, what is fix’d

- A gift of genuine insight ; that my Song  
 With star-like virtue in its place may shine,  
 Shedding benignant influence, and secure, 90  
 Itself, from all malevolent effect  
 Of those mutations that extend their sway  
 Throughout the nether sphere!—And if with this  
 I mix more lowly matter ; with the thing  
 Contemplated, describe the Mind and Man 95  
 Contemplating ; and who, and what he was—  
 The transitory Being that beheld  
 This Vision ; when and where, and how he lived ;—  
 Be not this labour useless. If such theme  
 May sort with highest objects, then—dread Power! 100  
 Whose gracious favour is the primal source  
 Of all illumination,—may my Life  
 Express the image of a better time,  
 More wise desires, and simpler manners ;—nurse  
 My Heart in genuine freedom :—all pure thoughts 105  
 Be with me ;—so shall thy unfailing love  
 Guide, and support, and cheer me to the end!”
- From fleeting, that my song may live, and be  
 Even as a light hung up in heaven to cheer  
 The world in times to come. And if with this  
 I mingle humbler matter *etc.* MS. 1: *so* MSS. 2, 3 *but* guidance  
 (*corr. to* succour MS. 2) *for* foresight, *verse for* song, Mankind *for* The world,  
 and blend more lowly *for* mingle humbler  
 88–93 that the body of my verse  
 By the mutations of the world untouch’d  
 And by its ferments undisturbed may shine  
 Even as a light hung up in heaven *etc.* MS. 2 *alt. draft*  
 98/9 With all his little realties of life MSS. 1, 2, 3  
 In part a Fellow-citizen, in part  
 An outlaw, and a Borderer of his age MS. 1  
 99–107 O great God,  
 To less than thee I cannot make this prayer.  
 Innocent mighty Spirit let my life  
 Express *etc.*  
 Desires more wise *etc.*  
 My heart *etc.*  
 Be with me and uphold me to the end MS. 1  
 100–2 With highest things may [ ] then great God  
 Thou who art breath and being, way and guide  
 And power, and understanding, may my life MS. 2: *so* MS. 3 *but*  
 101 Almighty being who art light and law.  
 106–7 MS. 2 as MS. 1

# THE EXCURSION

## BOOK FIRST

### THE WANDERER

#### ARGUMENT

A summer forenoon.—The Author reaches a ruined Cottage upon a Common, and there meets with a revered Friend, the Wanderer, of whose education and course of life he gives an account.<sup>1</sup>—The Wanderer, while resting under the shade of the Trees that surround the Cottage, relates the History of its last Inhabitant.

'Twas summer, and the sun had mounted high:  
Southward the landscape indistinctly glared  
Through a pale steam; but all the northern downs,  
In clearest air ascending, showed far off  
A surface dappled o'er with shadows flung 5  
From brooding clouds; shadows that lay in spots  
Determined and unmoved, with steady beams  
Of bright and pleasant sunshine interposed;  
To him most pleasant who on soft cool moss  
Extends his careless limbs along the front 10  
Of some huge cave, whose rocky ceiling casts  
A twilight of its own, an ample shade,

<sup>1</sup> so 1837: The Wanderer, of whom he gives an account— 1814–32  
For MSS. B, D v. pp. 378–409 *infra*

2–30 Travelling on foot and distant from my home  
Several days' journey, over the flat Plain  
Of a bare Common, I had toil'd along  
With languid steps, and when I stretch'd myself  
On the brown earth, my limbs from very heat  
Could find no rest, nor my weak arm disperse  
The host of insects gathering round my face.  
The time was hot, the place was shelterless;  
And, rising, right across the open Plain  
On to the spot I hasten'd, whither I  
Was bound that morning, a small group of Trees  
Which midway on the Common stood alone.  
I made no second stop, and soon I reach'd  
The port that lay before me full in view.  
It was a knot of clustering Elms that sprang  
As if from the same root, beneath whose shade  
I found a Ruin'd House MS. E

6 so 1827: From many a brooding cloud; far as the sight  
Could reach, those many shadows lay in spots 1814–20

9 so 1845: Pleasant to him who on the soft cool moss 1814–43

Where the wren warbles, while the dreaming man,  
 Half conscious of the soothing melody,  
 With side-long eye looks out upon the scene, 15  
 By power of that impending covert thrown  
 To finer distance. Mine was at that hour  
 Far other lot, yet with good hope that soon  
 Under a shade as grateful I should find  
 Rest, and be welcomed there to livelier joy. 20  
 Across a bare wide Common I was toiling  
 With languid steps that by the slippery turf  
 Were baffled; nor could my weak arm disperse  
 The host of insects gathering round my face,  
 And ever with me as I paced along. 25

Upon that open moorland stood a grove,  
 The wished-for port to which my course was bound.  
 Thither I came, and there, amid the gloom  
 Spread by a brotherhood of lofty elms,  
 Appeared a roofless Hut; four naked walls 30  
 That stared upon each other!—I looked round,  
 And to my wish and to my hope espied  
 The Friend I sought; a Man of reverend age,  
 But stout and hale, for travel unimpaired.  
 There was he seen upon the cottage-bench, 35  
 Recumbent in the shade, as if asleep;  
 An iron-pointed staff lay at his side.

Him had I marked the day before—alone  
 And stationed in the public way, with face

- 16-17 so 1827: By that impending covert made more soft,  
 More low and distant! MS. P, 1814-20
- 17-20 so 1845: Other lot was mine  
 Yet with good hope that soon I should obtain  
 As grateful resting-place, and livelier joy MS. P, 1814-43
- 22 steps that 1827: feet, which 1814-20; turf 1845: ground 1814-43
- 25-7 paced along,  
 Now with eyes turn'd tow'rds the far distant hills  
 Now toward a grove that from the wide-spread moor  
 Rose up, the port C
- 26 moorland 1845: level 1814-43 27 course was 1827: steps were  
 1814-20 33 The Friend 1845: Him whom 1814-43
- 38-41 so 1827: And in the middle of the public way  
 Stationed, as if to rest himself, with face  
 Turned tow'rds the sun then setting, while that staff

Turned toward the sun then setting, while that staff      40  
 Afforded, to the figure of the man  
 Detained for contemplation or repose,  
 Graceful support; his countenance as he stood  
 Was hidden from my view, and he remained  
 Unrecognised; but, stricken by the sight,      45  
 With slackened footsteps I advanced, and soon  
 A glad congratulation we exchanged  
 At such unthought-of meeting.—For the night  
 We parted, nothing willingly; and now  
 He by appointment waited for me here,      50  
 Under the covert of these clustering elms.

We were tried Friends: amid a pleasant vale,  
 In the antique market-village where was passed  
 My school-time, an apartment he had owned,  
 \*To which at intervals the Wanderer drew,      55  
 And found a kind of home or harbour there.  
 He loved me; from a swarm of rosy boys  
 Singled out me, as he in sport would say,

Afforded to his Figure, as he stood, 1814–20; MS. E *as*  
 B ll. 42–7; P 38–9 *as* 1814, 40–1 *as* B

Him had I chanc'd to see the day before  
 Standing alone in the open public way  
 [        ] as a statue, motionless,  
 Westward he looked as if his eyes were fixed  
 Upon the Sun C

40 toward 1832: tow'rd 1827: tow'rds 1814–20

42–7 With slacker pace towards him I advanced

Half wondering who the Man might be, but soon

As I came up to him, great joy was ours MS. E

43 *so* 1845: the countenance of the Man 1814–20: his countenance mean-  
 while 1827–43 47 P *as* E *corr. to text*

51 *so* 1845: Beneath the shelter 1814–43

Beneath these Elms, we having both a wish

To travel on together a few days MS. E

To turn to profit this good hap, and be

Companions to each other a few days MS. E<sup>2</sup>

52–5 *so* 1845; *so* 1827–43, *but* were passed My school-days:

We were tried Friends: I from my Childhood up

Had known him.—In a little Town obscure,

A market-village, seated in a tract

Of mountains, where my school-day time was pass'd,

One room he owned, the fifth part of a house,

A place to which he drew, from time to time, 1814–20: MS. E  
*as Addendum IV to D (q.v.)*

For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my years.  
 As I grew up, it was my best delight 60  
 To be his chosen comrade. Many a time,  
 On holidays, we rambled through the woods:  
 We sate—we walked; he pleased me with report  
 Of things which he had seen; and often touched  
 Abstrusest matter, reasonings of the mind 65  
 Turned inward; or at my request would sing  
 Old songs, the product of his native hills;  
 A skilful distribution of sweet sounds,  
 Feeding the soul, and eagerly imbibed  
 As cool refreshing water, by the care 70  
 Of the industrious husbandman, diffused  
 Through a parched meadow-ground, in time of drought.  
 Still deeper welcome found his pure discourse:  
 How precious when in riper days I learned  
 To weigh with care his words, and to rejoice 75  
 In the plain presence of his dignity!

Oh! many are the Poets that are sown  
 By Nature; men endowed with highest gifts,  
 The vision and the faculty divine;  
 Yet wanting the accomplishment of verse, 80  
 (Which, in the docile season of their youth,  
 It was denied them to acquire, through lack  
 Of culture and the inspiring aid of books,  
 Or haply by a temper too severe,  
 Or a nice backwardness afraid of shame) 85

- 62-3 so 1827: we wander'd through the woods,  
 A pair of random travellers; we sate—  
 We walked; he pleas'd me with his sweet discourse 1814-20  
 66-72 or, in other mood, he sang  
 Old songs, and sometimes, too, at my request  
 Psalms and religious anthems, sounds sedate  
 And soft, and most refreshing to the heart MS. E: so E<sup>3</sup> and M but  
 at my request  
 More solemn music which he in his youth  
 Had learn'd, religious anthems etc.  
 67 the product of] brought with him from C  
 77-89 *This passage first introduced in MS. E<sup>3</sup> but for ll. 81-9:*  
 And never being led by accident  
 Or circumstance to take unto the height  
 (By estimate comparative at least)  
 The measure of themselves, live out their time,

Nor having e'er, as life advanced, been led  
 By circumstance to take unto the height  
 The measure of themselves, these favoured Beings,  
 All but a scattered few, live out their time,  
 Husbanding that which they possess within, 90  
 And go to the grave, unthought of. Strongest minds  
 Are often those of whom the noisy world  
 Hears least; else surely this Man had not left  
 His graces unrevealed and unproclaimed.  
 But, as the mind was filled with inward light, 95  
 So not without distinction had he lived,  
 Beloved and honoured—far as he was known.  
 And some small portion of his eloquent speech,  
 And something that may serve to set in view  
 The feeling pleasures of his loneliness, 100  
 His observations, and the thoughts his mind  
 Had dealt with—I will here record in verse;  
 Which, if with truth it correspond, and sink  
 Or rise as venerable Nature leads,  
 The high and tender Muses shall accept 105  
 With gracious smile, deliberately pleased,  
 And listening Time reward with sacred praise.

Among the hills of Athol he was born;  
 Where, on a small hereditary farm,  
 An unproductive slip of rugged ground, 110  
 His Parents, with their numerous offspring, dwelt;

93/4 And sundry others, too, whom I have known MSS. E<sup>2</sup>, M: Nor  
 others of like mold *etc.* MS. P

95–102 Though born in low estate, and earning bread  
 By a low calling yet this very Man [mild good man P]  
 Was as [Rank'd with P] the prime and choice of sterling minds.  
 I honour'd him, respected, nay revered  
 And some small portion of his eloquent words [speech P]  
 And something that may serve to set in view  
 The feeling pleasures of his loneliness  
 The doings, observations which his life [mind P]  
 Had dealt with, I will here record in verse MSS. M, P

99 *not in* M, P 103 *so* P: *not in* M

108 Athol] Perthshire MSS. E, M, and C 109–10 *not in* MSS. E, M

109 Where, 1827: There, MS. P, 1814–20

111 *so* 1827: His Father dwelt; and died in poverty;  
 While He, whose lowly fortune I retrace,  
 The youngest of three sons, was yet a Babe,  
 A little One—unconscious of their loss.

A virtuous household, though exceeding poor!  
 Pure livers were they all, austere and grave,  
 And fearing God; the very children taught  
 Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's word, 115  
 And an habitual piety, maintained  
 With strictness scarcely known on English ground.

From his sixth year, the Boy of whom I speak,  
 In summer, tended cattle on the hills;  
 But, through the inclement and the perilous days 120  
 Of long-continuing winter, he repaired,  
 Equipped with satchel, to a school, that stood  
 Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge,  
 Remote from view of city spire, or sound  
 Of minster clock! From that bleak tenement 125  
 He, many an evening, to his distant home  
 In solitude returning, saw the hills  
 Grow larger in the darkness; all alone  
 Beheld the stars come out above his head,  
 And travelled through the wood, with no one near 130  
 To whom he might confess the things he saw.

So the foundations of his mind were laid.  
 In such communion, not from terror free,  
 While yet a child, and long before his time,  
 Had he perceived the presence and the power 135  
 Of greatness; and deep feelings had impressed  
 So vividly great objects that they lay

But ere he had outgrown his infant days  
 His widowed Mother, for a second Mate,  
 Espoused the Teacher of the Village School;  
 Who on her offspring zealously bestowed  
 Needful instruction; not alone in arts  
 Which to his humble duties appertained,  
 But in the lore of right and [or P] wrong, the rule  
 Of human kindness, in the peaceful ways  
 Of honesty, and holiness severe. MS. P, 1814-20

116-17 And piety scarce known on English Land MS. P 120-1 But  
 in the winter time he duly went MSS. E-P 122 so 1827: To his  
 Step-father's School, that stood alone, MSS. E-P 1814-20  
 137-9 so 1845: Great objects on his mind, with portraiture  
 And colour so distinct, that on his mind  
 They lay like substances, and almost seemed  
 To haunt the bodily sense. He had received

Upon his mind like substances, whose presence  
 Perplexed the bodily sense. He had received  
 A precious gift; for, as he grew in years, 140  
 With these impressions would he still compare  
 All his remembrances, thoughts, shapes, and forms;  
 And, being still unsatisfied with aught  
 Of dimmer character, he thence attained  
 An active power to fasten images 145  
 Upon his brain; and on their pictured lines  
 Intensely brooded, even till they acquired  
 The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,  
 While yet a child, with a child's eagerness  
 Incessantly to turn his ear and eye 150  
 On all things which the moving seasons brought  
 To feed such appetite—nor this alone  
 Appeased his yearning:—in the after-day  
 Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn,  
 And 'mid the hollow depths of naked crags 155  
 He sate, and even in their fixed lineaments,  
 Or from the power of a peculiar eye,  
 Or by creative feeling overborne,  
 Or by predominance of thought oppressed,  
 Even in their fixed and steady lineaments 160  
 He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,  
 Expression ever varying!

Thus informed,  
 He had small need of books; for many a tale  
 Traditionary, round the mountains hung,  
 And many a legend, peopling the dark woods, 165  
 Nourished Imagination in her growth,  
 And gave the Mind that apprehensive power  
 By which she is made quick to recognise  
 The moral properties and scope of things.  
 But eagerly he read, and read again, 170

(Vigorous in native genius as he was). (Vigorous in mind  
 by nature. MSS. E, M) MSS. E, M 1814–20: *so* 1827–43, *but omitting last*  
*line:*

Upon his mind great objects so distinct  
 In portraiture (lineament), in colouring so vivid  
 That on his mind they lay like substances  
 And almost indistinguishably mixed  
 With things of bodily sense. C

142 *so* MSS. E\*, M, P: All his ideal stores, his shapes and forms MS. E

Whate'er the minister's old shelf supplied ;  
 The life and death of martyrs, who sustained,  
 With will inflexible, those fearful pangs  
 Triumphant displayed in records left  
 Of persecution, and the Covenant—times 175  
 Whose echo rings through Scotland to this hour!  
 And there, by lucky hap, had been preserved  
 A straggling volume, torn and incomplete,  
 That left half-told the preternatural tale,  
 Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends, 180  
 Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts  
 Strange and uncouth ; dire faces, figures dire,  
 Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-ankled too,  
 With long and ghostly shanks—forms which once seen  
 Could never be forgotten!

In his heart, 185  
 Where Fear sate thus, a cherished visitant,  
 Was wanting yet the pure delight of love  
 By sound diffused, or by the breathing air,  
 Or by the silent looks of happy things,  
 Or flowing from the universal face 190  
 Of earth and sky. But he had felt the power  
 Of Nature, and already was prepared,  
 By his intense conceptions, to receive  
 Deeply the lesson deep of love which he,  
 Whom Nature, by whatever means, has taught 195  
 To feel intensely, cannot but receive.

Such was the Boy—but for the growing Youth  
 What soul was his, when, from the naked top

173-7 Intolerable pangs, and here and there MS. E

Intolerable pangs, the cruel time

Of superstition and the Covenant

That like an echo *etc.* E<sup>2</sup>

Intolerable pangs, the Records left

Of Persecution and the Covenant, times

That like an echo ring through Scotland still.

Nor haply was there wanting, here and there MSS. M, P, *but* P 176

*as text*

186 *not in* MSS. E, M

love MSS. E, M:

187 Love was not yet, nor the pure joy of

A milder Spirit yet had found no place.

Love yet was wanting, the pure joy of love MS. P

197-9 *so* 1827: From early childhood, even, as hath been said,

From his sixth year, he had been sent abroad

Of some bold headland, he beheld the sun  
 Rise up, and bathe the world in light! He looked— 200  
 Ocean and earth, the solid frame of earth  
 And ocean's liquid mass, in gladness lay  
 Beneath him:—Far and wide the clouds were touched,  
 And in their silent faces could he read  
 Unutterable love. Sound needed none, 205  
 Nor any voice of joy; his spirit drank  
 The spectacle: sensation, soul, and form,  
 All melted into him; they swallowed up  
 His animal being; in them did he live,  
 And by them did he live; they were his life. 210  
 In such access of mind, in such high hour  
 Of visitation from the living God,  
 Thought was not; in enjoyment it expired.  
 No thanks he breathed, he proffered no request;  
 'Rapt into still communion that transcends 215  
 The imperfect offices of prayer and praise,  
 His mind was a thanksgiving to the power  
 That made him; it was blessedness and love!

A Herdsman on the lonely mountain-tops,  
 Such intercourse was his, and in this sort 220  
 Was his existence oftentimes *possessed*.  
 O then how beautiful, how bright, appeared  
 The written promise! Early had he learned  
 To reverence the volume that displays  
 The mystery, the life which cannot die; 225  
 But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith.  
 All things, responsive to the writing, there

In summer to tend herds: such was his task

Thenceforward 'till the later day of youth.

O then what soul was his, when, on the tops

Of the high mountains, he beheld the sun. 1814-20: *so*

MSS. E-P, *but in first line as I have said*

201-3 The ocean and the earth beneath him lay

In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched MSS. E-P

202-3 *so* 1845: . . . mass, beneath him lay *etc. as* MSS., 1814-43

214-16 *so* MS. P: Such hour by prayer or praise was unprofan'd

He neither pray'd nor offer'd thanks or praise, MS. E,  
*so E<sup>a</sup> and M, but omitting second line*

223 *so* 1827 He had early learned MSS., 1814-20

227 *so* 1832: There did he see the writing;—all things there MSS.

1814-20: Responsive to the writing, all things there 1827

Breathed immortality, revolving life,  
 And greatness still revolving ; infinite :  
 There littleness was not ; the least of things 230  
 Seemed infinite ; and there his spirit shaped  
 Her prospects, nor did he believe,—he *saw*.  
 What wonder if his being thus became  
 Sublime and comprehensive ! Low desires,  
 Low thoughts had there no place ; yet was his heart 235  
 Lowly ; for he was meek in gratitude,  
 Oft as he called those ecstasies to mind,  
 And whence they flowed ; and from them he acquired  
 Wisdom, which works thro' patience ; thence he learned  
 In oft-recurring hours of sober thought 240  
 To look on Nature with a humble heart,  
 Self-questioned where it did not understand,  
 And with a superstitious eye of love.

So passed the time ; yet to the nearest town  
 He duly went with what small overplus 245  
 His earnings might supply, and brought away  
 The book that most had tempted his desires  
 While at the stall he read. Among the hills  
 He gazed upon that mighty orb of song,  
 The divine Milton. Lore of different kind, 250  
 The annual savings of a toilsome life,  
 His Schoolmaster supplied ; books that explain  
 The purer elements of truth involved  
 In lines and numbers, and, by charm severe,  
 (Especially perceived where nature droops 255  
 And feeling is suppressed) preserve the mind  
 Busy in solitude and poverty.  
 These occupations oftentimes deceived  
 The listless hours, while in the hollow vale,  
 Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf 260  
 In pensive idleness. What could he do,  
 Thus daily thirsting, in that lonesome life,

240 *so* 1827: In many a calmer hour MSS., 1814-20 244 the nearest  
 1827: a [the MSS.] neighbouring MSS., 1814-20 247 tempted  
 MS. M: waken'd MS. E 252 Schoolmaster 1827: Step-father MSS.,  
 1814-20 258 And thus employ'd he many a time o'erlook'd MSS.  
 262-3 *so* 1827: The weight of genius was upon his mind *del.* MS. E<sup>2</sup>  
 With blind endeavours, in that lonesome life,  
 Thus thirsting daily ? MSS. M, P, 1814-20

With blind endeavours? Yet, still uppermost,  
 Nature was at his heart as if he felt,  
 Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power 265  
 In all things that from her sweet influence  
 Might tend to wean him. Therefore with her hues,  
 Her forms, and with the spirit of her forms,  
 He clothed the nakedness of austere truth.  
 While yet he lingered in the rudiments 270  
 Of science, and among her simplest laws,  
 His triangles—they were the stars of heaven,  
 The silent stars! Oft did he take delight  
 To measure the altitude of some tall crag  
 That is the eagle's birthplace, or some peak 275  
 Familiar with forgotten years, that shows  
 Inscribed upon its visionary sides,  
 The history of many a winter storm,  
 Or obscure records of the path of fire.

And thus before his eighteenth year was told, 280  
 Accumulated feelings pressed his heart  
 With still increasing weight; he was o'erpowered  
 By Nature; by the turbulence subdued  
 Of his own mind; by mystery and hope,  
 And the first virgin passion of a soul 285  
 Communing with the glorious universe.  
 Full often wished he that the winds might rage  
 When they were silent: far more fondly now  
 Than in his earlier season did he love  
 Tempestuous nights—the conflict and the sounds 290  
 That live in darkness. From his intellect  
 And from the stillness of abstracted thought

264 as if he felt MS. M: and he perceived MS. E 270 rudiments]  
 elements MSS.

277 so 1845: Inscribed, as with the silence of the thought,  
 Upon its bleak and visionary sides, MSS., 1814–43  
 Inscribed, for [intercourse ?] with speechless thought C

278–9 of widespread ruin wrought

By torrent, tempest or departing frost

Or obscure *etc.* C

280 told] gone MSS. 280–300 not in MS. E 280–340 v. MS. D:  
 Addendum v. p. 405 *infra*. 282 still 1827: an 1814–20 283 By  
 his own nature, by the turbulence MSS. 284 mind] heart MSS.  
 285 soul] mind MSS.

He asked repose ; and, failing oft to win  
 The peace required, he scanned the laws of light  
 Amid the roar of torrents, where they send 295  
 From hollow clefts up to the clearer air  
 A cloud of mist, that smitten by the sun  
 Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus,  
 And vainly by all other means, he strove  
 To mitigate the fever of his heart. 300

In dreams, in study, and in ardent thought,  
 Thus was he reared ; much wanting to assist  
 The growth of intellect, yet gaining more,  
 And every moral feeling of his soul  
 Strengthened and braced, by breathing in content 305  
 The keen, the wholesome, air of poverty,  
 And drinking from the well of homely life.  
 —But, from past liberty, and tried restraints,  
 He now was summoned to select the course  
 Of humble industry that promised best 310  
 To yield him no unworthy maintenance.  
 Urged by his Mother, he essayed to teach

293 *so* 1827: He asked repose ; and I have heard him say  
 That often, failing at this time to gain 1814–20

293–4 He sought repose in vain : I have heard him say  
 That at this time he MSS. E<sup>2</sup>, M, P

297–8 *so* 1827: which in the shining sun *etc.* MSS. E<sup>2</sup>, M, P:  
 which in the sunshine frames

A lasting tablet—for the observer's eye  
 Varying *etc.* 1814–20

302–3 *so* 1827: Thus, even from childhood upward, was he reared ;  
 For intellectual progress wanting much,  
 Doubtless, of needful help—yet gaining more, 1814–20

302 *not in* MS. E: *in* MSS. E<sup>2</sup>, M, P *as* 1814

303–6 He wanting much, perhaps (E) Doubtless in want of much, yet  
 gaining more

Breathing a piercing air of poverty MSS.

308–11 And now growing up (E) brought near [drawing near M] to man-  
 hood he began

To think about his future life (E) years (M) [life's future course P]  
 and how

He best might earn his worldly maintenance MSS.

312–14 *so* 1827: The Mother strove to make her Son perceive  
 With what advantage he might teach a School  
 In the adjoining Village ; but the Youth,  
 Who of this service made a short essay,  
 Found that the wanderings of his thought were then  
 A misery to him ; that he must resign MSS., 1814–20

A village-school—but wandering thoughts were then  
 A misery to him ; and the Youth resigned  
 A task he was unable to perform. 315

That stern yet kindly Spirit, who constrains  
 The Savoyard to quit his naked rocks,  
 The freeborn Swiss to leave his narrow vales,  
 (Spirit attached to regions mountainous  
 Like their own stedfast clouds) did now impel 320  
 His restless mind to look abroad with hope.  
 —An irksome drudgery seems it to plod on,  
 Through hot and dusty ways, or pelting storm,  
 A vagrant Merchant under a heavy load  
 Bent as he moves, and needing frequent rest ; 325  
 Yet do such travellers find their own delight ;  
 And their hard service, deemed debasing now,  
 Gained merited respect in simpler times ;  
 When squire, and priest, and they who round them dwelt  
 In rustic sequestration—all dependent 330  
 Upon the PEDLAR's toil—supplied their wants,  
 Or pleased their fancies, with the wares he brought.  
 Not ignorant was the Youth that still no few  
 Of his adventurous countrymen were led  
 By perseverance in this track of life 335  
 To competence and ease:—to him it offered  
 Attractions manifold ;—and this he chose.  
 —His Parents on the enterprise bestowed

315-37 He had a Brother elder than himself  
 Six years, who long before, had left his home  
 To journey up and down with Pedlar's wares  
 In England where he traffick'd at that time,  
 Healthy and prosperous. "What should hinder now,"  
 Said he within himself, "but that I go  
 And toil in the same calling ?" And, in truth,  
 This plan, long time had been his favorite thought MSS. E-P  
 (cf. D. Add. V)

323 so 1827: Through dusty ways, in storm, from door to door, 1814-20  
 324 under a heavy 1837: bent beneath his 1814-32 325 not in  
 1814-20

338-9 so 1827: He asked his Mother's blessing ; he with tears  
 Thank'd the good Man, his second Father, ask'd  
 From him paternal blessings, and set forth  
 A Traveller bound for England. The good Pair  
 Offer'd up prayers, and bless'd him ; but with hearts MSS.  
 He asked his Mother's blessing ; and, with tears

Their farewell benediction, but with hearts  
 Foreboding evil. From his native hills 340  
 He wandered far ; much did he see of men,<sup>1</sup>  
 Their manners, their enjoyments, and pursuits,  
 Their passions and their feelings ; chiefly those  
 Essential and eternal in the heart,  
 That, 'mid the simpler forms of rural life, 345  
 Exist more simple in their elements,  
 And speak a plainer language. In the woods,  
 A lone Enthusiast, and among the fields,  
 Itinerant in this labour, he had passed  
 The better portion of his time ; and there 350  
 Spontaneously had his affections thriven  
 Amid the bounties of the year, the peace  
 And liberty of nature ; there he kept  
 In solitude and solitary thought  
 His mind in a just equipoise of love. 355  
 Serene it was, unclouded by the cares  
 Of ordinary life ; unvexed, unwarped  
 By partial bondage. In his steady course,  
 No piteous revolutions had he felt,  
 No wild varieties of joy and grief. 360  
 Unoccupied by sorrow of its own,  
 His heart lay open ; and, by nature tuned  
 And constant disposition of his thoughts  
 To sympathy with man, he was alive  
 To all that was enjoyed where'er he went, 365  
 And all that was endured ; for, in himself  
 Happy, and quiet in his cheerfulness,  
 He had no painful pressure from without  
 That made him turn aside from wretchedness  
 With coward fears. He could *afford* to suffer 370  
 With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it came  
 That in our best experience he was rich,  
 And in the wisdom of our daily life.

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 411.

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Thanking his second Father, asked from him  
 Paternal blessings. The good Pair bestowed *etc. as text* 1814-20  
 351-3 *so* 1827: From day to day had his affections breath'd  
 The wholesome air of nature MSS., 1814-20 *as text, but*  
 Upon the bounties of the year, and felt  
 The liberty of Nature

For hence, minutely, in his various rounds,  
 He had observed the progress and decay 375  
 Of many minds, of minds and bodies too ;  
 The history of many families ;  
 How they had prospered ; how they were o'erthrown  
 By passion or mischance, or such misrule  
 Among the unthinking masters of the earth 380  
 As makes the nations groan.

This active course

He followed till provision for his wants  
 Had been obtained ;—the Wanderer then resolved  
 To pass the remnant of his days, untasked  
 With needless services, from hardship free. 385  
 His calling laid aside, he lived at ease :  
 But still he loved to pace the public roads  
 And the wild paths ; and, by the summer's warmth  
 Invited, often would he leave his home  
 And journey far, revisiting the scenes 390  
 That to his memory were most endeared.  
 —Vigorous in health, of hopeful spirits, undamped  
 By worldly-mindedness or anxious care ;  
 Observant, studious, thoughtful, and refreshed  
 By knowledge gathered up from day to day ; 395  
 Thus had he lived a long and innocent life.

The Scottish Church, both on himself and those  
 With whom from childhood he grew up, had held  
 The strong hand of her purity ; and still  
 Had watched him with an unrelenting eye. 400  
 This he remembered in his riper age  
 With gratitude, and reverential thoughts.  
 But by the native vigour of his mind,

380 masters MS. M: Rulers MS. E 381–92 groan. Untouched by  
 [Pure from all E] taint Of worldly mindedness E–P, *but an addition to*  
*P gives draft of the lines of text*

382–3 *so* 1827: Chosen in youth, through manhood he pursued,  
 Till due provision for his modest wants  
 Had been obtained ;—and, thereupon, resolved. 1814–20

388–91 *so* 1827: . . . and, when the summer's warmth  
 Invited him, would often leave his home  
 And journey far, revisiting those scenes  
 Which to his memory were most endeared. 1814–20

392 undamped 1827: untouched 1814–20 401 age] years MSS.

By his habitual wanderings out of doors,  
 By loneliness, and goodness, and kind works, 405  
 Whate'er, in docile childhood or in youth,  
 He had imbibed of fear or darker thought  
 Was melted all away; so true was this,  
 That sometimes his religion seemed to me  
 Self-taught, as of a dreamer in the woods; 410  
 Who to the model of his own pure heart  
 Shaped his belief, as grace divine inspired,  
 And human reason dictated with awe.  
 —And surely never did there live on earth  
 A man of kindlier nature. The rough sports 415  
 And teasing ways of children vexed not him;  
 Indulgent listener was he to the tongue  
 Of garrulous age; nor did the sick man's tale,  
 To his fraternal sympathy addressed,  
 Obtain reluctant hearing.

Plain his garb; 420  
 Such as might suit a rustic Sire, prepared  
 For sabbath duties; yet he was a man  
 Whom no one could have passed without remark.  
 Active and nervous was his gait; his limbs  
 And his whole figure breathed intelligence. 425  
 Time had compressed the freshness of his cheek  
 Into a narrower circle of deep red,  
 But had not tamed his eye; that, under brows  
 Shaggy and grey, had meanings which it brought  
 From years of youth; which, like a Being made 430  
 Of many Beings, he had wondrous skill  
 To blend with knowledge of the years to come,  
 Human, or such as lie beyond the grave.

So was He framed; and such his course of life

406 Whatever in his childhood MSS. 411–13 *not in* MSS. E, M;  
*added to P* 412 Shaped 1827: Framed 'MS. P, 1814–20 413  
 And 1836: Or 1814–32

415–22 A man of sweeter temper. Birds and beasts  
 He lov'd them all, chickens and household dogs,  
 And to the kitten of a neighbour's house  
 Would carry crumbs [*corr. to milk* E] and feed it. Poor and plain  
 Was his appearance, yet he was a man MSS.

416/17 Nor could he bid them from his presence, tired  
 With questions and importunate demands: 1814–20

434–9 Such was in brief the history of my Friend;

- Who now, with no appendage but a staff, 435  
 The prized memorial of relinquished toils,  
 Upon that cottage-bench reposed his limbs,  
 Screened from the sun. Supine the Wanderer lay,  
 His eyes as if in drowsiness half shut,  
 The shadows of the breezy elms above 440  
 Dappling his face. He had not heard the sound  
 Of my approaching steps, and in the shade  
 Unnoticed did I stand some minutes' space.  
 At length I hailed him, seeing that his hat  
 Was moist with water-drops, as if the brim 445  
 Had newly scooped a running stream. He rose,  
 And ere our lively greeting into peace  
 Had settled, "'Tis," said I, a "a burning day:  
 My lips are parched with thirst, but you, it seems,  
 Have somewhere found relief." He, at the word, 450  
 Pointing towards a sweet-briar, bade me climb  
 The fence where that aspiring shrub looked out  
 Upon the public way. It was a plot  
 Of garden ground run wild, its matted weeds  
 Marked with the steps of those, whom, as they passed, 455  
 The gooseberry trees that shot in long lank slips,  
 Or currants, hanging from their leafless stems,  
 In scanty strings, had tempted to o'erleap
- So was he fram'd.—Now on the Bench he lay  
 And of his Pack of merchandize had made  
 A pillow for his head: his eyes were shut MSS. D-P: P *corr. last*  
*three lines to*  
 And one memorial of his former toils  
 A Staff with iron filleted and forked  
 Lay at his side
- 441-3 *so* 1827: He had not heard my steps  
 As I approached; and near him did I stand  
 Unnotic'd in the shade, some minutes' space. MSS. M, P,  
 1814-20
- 447-8 *so* 1827: And ere the joyful greeting which we had  
 Was ended, "'Tis a burning day," said I MS. E: *so* M,  
*but pleasant greeting*  
 And ere the pleasant greeting that ensued  
 Was ended, *etc.* MS. P, 1814-20
- 449 *it seems* 1827: I see MS. E: I guess MS. P, 1814-20
- 452-3 *so* 1827: The fence hard by, where that aspiring [tall slender MSS.]  
 shrub  
 Looked out upon the road. MSS., 1814-20  
 456-8 that shewed their dwindled fruit  
 Hanging in long lank slips, or leafless strings  
 Of Currants might have C

The broken wall. I looked around, and there,  
 Where two tall hedge-rows of thick alder boughs 460  
 Joined in a cold damp nook, espied a well  
 Shrouded with willow-flowers and plummy fern.  
 My thirst I slaked, and, from the cheerless spot  
 Withdrawing, straightway to the shade returned  
 Where sate the old Man on the cottage-bench; 465  
 And, while, beside him, with uncovered head,  
 I yet was standing, freely to respire,  
 And cool my temples in the fanning air,  
 Thus did he speak. "I see around me here  
 Things which you cannot see: we die, my Friend, 470  
 Nor we alone, but that which each man loved  
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
 Dies with him, or is changed; and very soon  
 Even of the good is no memorial left.  
 —The Poets, in their elegies and songs 475  
 Lamenting the departed, call the groves,  
 They call upon the hills and streams to mourn,  
 And senseless rocks; nor idly; for they speak,  
 In these their invocations, with a voice  
 Obedient to the strong creative power 480  
 Of human passion. Sympathies there are  
 More tranquil, yet perhaps of kindred birth,  
 That steal upon the meditative mind,  
 And grow with thought. Beside yon spring I stood,  
 And eyed its waters till we seemed to feel 485  
 One sadness, they and I. For them a bond  
 Of brotherhood is broken: time has been  
 When, every day, the touch of human hand  
 Dislodged the natural sleep that binds them up  
 In mortal stillness; and they ministered 490  
 459 around] about MSS. 461 espied] I found MSS. 462 Half  
 cover'd up with willow flowers and grass MSS. E, M (*corr. to fern P*)  
 463-9 I slak'd my thirst; and soon as to the Bench  
 I had return'd, while with uncover'd head  
 I stood, to catch the motion of the air,  
 The old Man spake MSS. E, M  
 My thirst I slaked, and from the cheerless spot  
 Withdrew, and while beside the shady bench  
 Yet was I standing with uncovered head  
 Intent to catch the motion of the air,  
 The Old Man spoke MS. P  
 489-90 Disturb'd their stillness, and they ministered MSS. B-E

To human comfort. Stooping down to drink,  
 Upon the slimy foot-stone I espied  
 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl,  
 Green with the moss of years, and subject only  
 To the soft handling of the elements: 495  
 There let it lie—how foolish are such thoughts!  
 Forgive them;—never—never did my steps  
 Approach this door but she who dwelt within  
 A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved her  
 As my own child. Oh, Sir! the good die first, 500  
 And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust  
 Burn to the socket. Many a passenger  
 Hath blessed poor Margaret for her gentle looks,  
 When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn  
 From that forsaken spring; and no one came 505  
 But he was welcome; no one went away  
 But that it seemed she loved him. She is dead,  
 The light extinguished of her lonely hut,  
 The hut itself abandoned to decay,  
 And she forgotten in the quiet grave. 510

“I speak,” continued he, “of One whose stock  
 Of virtues bloomed beneath this lowly roof.

- 491 Stooping down] 1827: When [As 1814] I stooped MSS., 1814–20  
 494–8 It mov'd me to the [my very M] heart. The time has been  
 When I could never pass this road but she  
 Who liv'd within these walls, when I appear'd MSS. E, M  
 Green with the moss of years; a pensive sight [a sight it was P]  
 That moved my heart!—recalling former days  
 When I could never pass that road but She  
 Who lived within these walls, at my approach, MS. P, *but* (when I  
 appeared), 1814–20  
 Green with the moss of years, a forlorn relic  
 There let it lie in memory of days  
 Departed; never never did my steps C<sup>1</sup>  
 Green with the moss of years. Upon the relique  
 As there it lay I could not look unmoved.  
 Forgive the weakness—Never did step of mine C<sup>2</sup>  
 Upon the simple sight I could not look  
 Unmoved—never—never did step of mine C<sup>3</sup>  
 494–5 *so* 1827 496 *so* 1837 497–8 *so* 1832  
 498–8 There let the relic lie—fond thought—vain words!  
 Forgive them—never did my steps approach  
 This humble door but she who dwelt within 1827 *only*  
 508–10 Forgotten in the quiet of the grave MSS.  
 511–12 I speak of a poor Woman who dwelt here,

She was a Woman of a steady mind,  
 Tender and deep in her excess of love;  
 Not speaking much, pleased rather with the joy 515  
 Of her own thoughts: by some especial care  
 Her temper had been framed, as if to make  
 A Being, who by adding love to peace  
 Might live on earth a life of happiness.  
 Her wedded Partner lacked not on his side 520  
 The humble worth that satisfied her heart:  
 Frugal, affectionate, sober, and withal  
 Keenly industrious. She with pride would tell  
 That he was often seated at his loom,  
 In summer, ere the mower was abroad 525  
 Among the dewy grass,—in early spring,  
 Ere the last star had vanished.—They who passed  
 At evening, from behind the garden fence  
 Might hear his busy spade, which he would ply,  
 After his daily work, until the light 530  
 Had failed, and every leaf and flower were lost  
 In the dark hedges. So their days were spent  
 In peace and comfort; and a pretty boy  
 Was their best hope, next to the God in heaven.

“Not twenty years ago, but you I think 535  
 Can scarcely bear it now in mind, there came  
 Two blighting seasons, when the fields were left  
 With half a harvest. It pleased Heaven to add  
 A worse affliction in the plague of war:  
 This happy Land was stricken to the heart! 540  
 A Wanderer then among the cottages,  
 I, with my freight of winter raiment, saw  
 The hardships of that season: many rich  
 Sank down, as in a dream, among the poor;  
 And of the poor did many cease to be, 545  
 And their place knew them not. Meanwhile, abridged  
 Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled

This Cottage was her home, and she the best

Of many thousands who are good and poor. MSS.

520-4 so MS. P: She had a husband, an industrious Man

Sober and frugal [steady MS. D]; I have heard her say

That he was up and busy at his loom MSS. D, E, M

526 Among the grass, and in the [oft in P] early Spring MSS. 531

Had failed 1814: Was gone MSS.

To numerous self-denials, Margaret  
 Went struggling on through those calamitous years  
 With cheerful hope, until the second autumn, 550  
 When her life's Helpmate on a sick-bed lay,  
 Smitten with perilous fever. In disease  
 He lingered long; and, when his strength returned,  
 He found the little he had stored, to meet  
 The hour of accident or crippling age, 555  
 Was all consumed. A second infant now  
 Was added to the troubles of a time  
 Laden, for them and all of their degree,  
 With care and sorrow: shoals of artisans  
 From ill-requited labour turned adrift 560  
 Sought daily bread from public charity,  
 They, and their wives and children—happier far  
 Could they have lived as do the little birds  
 That peck along the hedge-rows, or the kite  
 That makes her dwelling on the mountain rocks! 565

“A sad reverse it was for him who long  
 Had filled with plenty, and possessed in peace,  
 This lonely Cottage. At the door he stood,  
 And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes  
 That had no mirth in them; or with his knife 570  
 Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks—  
 Then, not less idly, sought, through every nook  
 In house or garden, any casual work  
 Of use or ornament; and with a strange,

550 . . . but ere the second autumn MSS., 1814–20

551–2 A fever seized her Husband. In disease MSS. E, M  
 Her husband to a sick-bed was confined

Labouring with perilous fever. In disease MS. P

Her life's true Helpmate *etc. as text* 1814–20

556–61 *so* 1827: Was all consumed. Two children had they now,  
 One newly born. As I have said, it was  
 A time of trouble; shoals of Artisans  
 Were from their daily labour turn'd adrift [away MSS.  
 E, M]

To seek their bread from public charity, MSS., 1814–20

564–5 hedge-rows . . . her dwelling 1827: hedges . . . his dwelling MSS.,  
 1814–20

566–8 Ill far'd it now with Robert, he who dwelt

Here in this Cottage. At his door MSS.

572 Then idly sought about MSS.

Amusing, yet uneasy, novelty, 575  
 He mingled, where he might, the various tasks  
 Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring.  
 But this endured not; his good humour soon  
 Became a weight in which no pleasure was:  
 And poverty brought on a petted mood 580  
 And a sore temper: day by day he drooped,  
 And he would leave his work—and to the town  
 Would turn without an errand his slack steps;  
 Or wander here and there among the fields.  
 One while he would speak lightly of his babes, 585  
 And with a cruel tongue: at other times  
 He tossed them with a false unnatural joy:  
 And 'twas a rueful thing to see the looks  
 Of the poor innocent children. 'Every smile,'  
 Said Margaret to me, here beneath these trees, 590  
 'Made my heart bleed.' "

At this the Wanderer paused;

And, looking up to those enormous elms,  
 He said, " 'Tis now the hour of deepest noon.  
 At this still season of repose and peace,  
 This hour when all things which are not at rest 595  
 Are cheerful; while this multitude of flies  
 With tuneful hum is filling all the air;  
 Why should a tear be on an old Man's cheek?  
 Why should we thus, with an untoward mind,  
 And in the weakness of humanity, 600  
 From natural wisdom turn our hearts away;  
 To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears;  
 And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb  
 The calm of nature with our restless thoughts?"

He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone: 605  
 But, when he ended, there was in his face  
 Such easy cheerfulness, a look so mild,  
 That for a little time it stole away  
 All recollection; and that simple tale

576 mingled 1837: blended MSS., 1814-32 582 work] home MSS.

583 so 1837: Without an errand would he turn his steps MSS. E, M:  
 would direct his steps MS. P, 1814-32 591 Wanderer] Old Man

MSS. 597 tuneful] ceaseless *corr. to* tuneful C

597-8 so 1845: Is filling all the air with melody;

Why should a tear be in an Old Man's eye? MSS., 1814-43

Passed from my mind like a forgotten sound. 610  
 A while on trivial things we held discourse,  
 To me soon tasteless. In my own despite,  
 I thought of that poor Woman as of one  
 Whom I had known and loved. He had rehearsed  
 Her homely tale with such familiar power, 615  
 With such an active countenance, an eye  
 So busy, that the things of which he spake  
 Seemed present; and, attention now relaxed,  
 A heart-felt chillness crept along my veins.  
 I rose; and, having left the breezy shade, 620  
 Stood drinking comfort from the warmer sun,  
 That had not cheered me long—ere, looking round  
 Upon that tranquil Ruin, I returned,  
 And begged of the old Man that, for my sake,  
 He would resume his story.

He replied, 625  
 "It were a wantonness, and would demand  
 Severe reproof, if we were men whose hearts  
 Could hold vain dalliance with the misery  
 Even of the dead; contented thence to draw  
 A momentary pleasure, never marked 630  
 By reason, barren of all future good.  
 But we have known that there is often found  
 In mournful thoughts, and always might be found,  
 A power to virtue friendly; wer't not so,  
 I am a dreamer among men, indeed 635  
 An idle dreamer! 'Tis a common tale,  
 An ordinary sorrow of man's life,  
 A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed  
 In bodily form.—But without further bidding  
 I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them, 640

619–22 so 1827: There was a heart-felt chillness in my veins.—

I rose; and, turning from the breezy shade,  
 Went forth into the open air, and stood  
 To drink the comfort of the warmer sun.

Long time I had not staid, ere, MSS., 1814–20

630 passing pleasure felt but *Alfoxden* MS.

639 so MSS. M, P: In bodily form, and to the grosser sense

But ill adapted, scarcely palpable

To him who does not think; but at your bidding MS. E

To whom this cottage, till those hapless years,  
 Had been a blessèd home, it was my chance  
 To travel in a country far remote ;  
 And when these lofty elms once more appeared  
 What pleasant expectations lured me on 645  
 O'er the flat Common!—With quick step I reached  
 The threshold, lifted with light hand the latch ;  
 But, when I entered, Margaret looked at me  
 A little while ; then turned her head away  
 Speechless,—and, sitting down upon a chair, 650  
 Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do,  
 Nor how to speak to her. Poor Wretch! at last  
 She rose from off her seat, and then,—O Sir!  
 I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my name:—  
 With fervent love, and with a face of grief 655  
 Unutterably helpless, and a look  
 That seemed to cling upon me, she enquired  
 If I had seen her husband. As she spake  
 A strange surprise and fear came to my heart,  
 Nor had I power to answer ere she told 660  
 That he had disappeared—not two months gone.  
 He left his house: two wretched days had past,  
 And on the third, as wistfully she raised  
 Her head from off her pillow, to look forth,  
 Like one in trouble, for returning light, 665  
 Within her chamber-casement she espied  
 A folded paper, lying as if placed  
 To meet her waking eyes. This tremblingly

644–8 *so* 1827: And glad I was, when, halting by yon gate  
 That leads from the green lane, once more I saw  
 These lofty elm-trees. Long I did not rest:  
 With many pleasant thoughts I chear'd my way  
 O'er the flat Common.—Having reached the door [At the  
 door arrived MS.]

I knock'd,—and, when I entered with the hope  
 Of usual greeting, Margaret looked at me MSS., 1814–20

656–7 Unutterable, and a helpless look that seemed  
 To cling upon me faltering she C

661 not] just MSS.

663–70 And on the third, by the first break of light  
 Within her casement full in view she saw  
 A letter, as it seemed, which she forthwith  
 Open'd, and found no writing, but therein  
 Pieces of money carefully wrapp'd up MSS.

She opened—found no writing, but beheld  
 Pieces of money carefully enclosed, 670  
 Silver and gold. ‘I shuddered at the sight,’  
 Said Margaret, ‘for I knew it was his hand  
 That must have placed it there; and ere that day  
 Was ended, that long anxious day, I learned,  
 From one who by my husband had been sent 675  
 With the sad news, that he had joined a troop  
 Of soldiers, going to a distant land.  
 —He left me thus—he could not gather heart  
 To take a farewell of me; for he feared  
 That I should follow with my babes, and sink 680  
 Beneath the misery of that wandering life.’

“This tale did Margaret tell with many tears:  
 And, when she ended, I had little power  
 To give her comfort, and was glad to take  
 Such words of hope from her own mouth as served 685  
 To cheer us both. But long we had not talked  
 Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts,  
 And with a brighter eye she looked around  
 As if she had been shedding tears of joy.  
 We parted.—’Twas the time of early spring; 690  
 I left her busy with her garden tools;  
 And well remember, o’er that fence she looked,  
 And, while I paced along the foot-way path,  
 Called out, and sent a blessing after me,  
 With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice 695  
 That seemed the very sound of happy thoughts.

“I roved o’er many a hill and many a dale,  
 With my accustomed load; in heat and cold,

669 beheld 1827: therein MSS., 1814–20 671 shuddered] trembled MSS.

673–6 so 1837: Which plac’d it there, and on that very day,  
 By one who from my Husband had been sent,  
 The tidings came that *etc.* MSS.  
 Which placed it there: and ere that day was ended,  
 That long and anxious day! I learned from One  
 Sent hither by my Husband to impart  
 The heavy news,—that *etc.* 1814–32

678 —Poor Man! he had not heart MSS. 698 With this my weary  
 load MSS.

Through many a wood and many an open ground,  
 In sunshine and in shade, in wet and fair, 700  
 Drooping or blithe of heart, as might befall;  
 My best companions now the driving winds,  
 And now the 'trotting brooks' and whispering trees,  
 And now the music of my own sad steps,  
 With many a short-lived thought that passed between, 705  
 And disappeared.

I journeyed back this way,  
 When, in the warmth of midsummer, the wheat  
 Was yellow; and the soft and bladed grass,  
 Springing afresh, had o'er the hay-field spread  
 Its tender verdure. At the door arrived, 710  
 I found that she was absent. In the shade,  
 Where now we sit, I waited her return.  
 Her cottage, then a cheerful object, wore  
 Its customary look,—only, it seemed,  
 The honeysuckle, crowding round the porch, 715  
 Hung down in heavier tufts; and that bright weed,  
 The yellow stone-crop, suffered to take root  
 Along the window's edge, profusely grew  
 Blinding the lower panes. I turned aside,  
 And strolled into her garden. It appeared 720  
 To lag behind the season, and had lost  
 Its pride of neatness. Daisy-flowers and thrift

701 *so* MS. P: Now blithe, now drooping, as it might befall; MSS. E-M  
 706 I came this way again MSS. 707 *so* 1827: Towards the wane  
 of Summer; when the wheat MSS., 1814-20 710 Its tender green.  
 When I had reach'd the door MSS.

713-19 Her cottage, in its outward look, appear'd  
 As cheerful as before, in any shew  
 Of neatness little chang'd; but that I thought  
 The honeysuckle crowded round the door,  
 And from the wall hung down in heavier tufts  
 And knots of worthless stone-crop started out  
 Along the window's edge and grew like weeds  
 Against the lower panes. MSS.

722-8 Its trimness and its pride. The border tufts,  
 Daisy and thrift, and lowly camomile  
 And thyme had straggled out into the path,  
 The bindweed with its bells and cumbrous wreaths MSS. E, M  
 Its pride of neatness. From the border lines  
 Composed of daisy and resplendent thrift,  
 Flowers straggling forth had on those paths encroached  
 Which they were used to deck:—Carnations *etc.* *as text* MS. P, 1814-20

Had broken their trim border-lines, and straggled  
 O'er paths they used to deck: carnations, once  
 Prized for surpassing beauty, and no less 725  
 For the peculiar pains they had required,  
 Declined their languid heads, wanting support.  
 The cumbrous bind-weed, with its wreaths and bells,  
 Had twined about her two small rows of peas,  
 And dragged them to the earth.

Ere this an hour 730  
 Was wasted.—Back I turned my restless steps;  
 A stranger passed; and, guessing whom I sought,  
 He said that she was used to ramble far.—  
 The sun was sinking in the west; and now  
 I sate with sad impatience. From within 735  
 Her solitary infant cried aloud;  
 Then, like a blast that dies away self-stilled,  
 The voice was silent. From the bench I rose;  
 But neither could divert nor soothe my thoughts.  
 The spot, though fair, was very desolate— 740  
 The longer I remained, more desolate:  
 And, looking round me, now I first observed  
 The corner stones, on either side the porch,  
 With dull red stains discoloured, and stuck o'er  
 With tufts and hairs of wool, as if the sheep, 745  
 That fed upon the Common, thither came  
 Familiarly, and found a couching-place  
 Even at her threshold. Deeper shadows fell  
 From these tall elms; the cottage-clock struck eight;—  
 I turned, and saw her distant a few steps. 750  
 Her face was pale and thin—her figure, too,  
 Was changed. As she unlocked the door, she said,  
 'It grieves me you have waited here so long,  
 But, in good truth, I've wandered much of late;  
 And, sometimes—to my shame I speak—have need 755  
 Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'

Daisy-flowers and thrift

Had broken their trim lines, and straggled o'er

The paths they used to deck *etc.* 1827-43

731/2 And, as I walk'd before the door, it chanc'd MSS., 1814-20

737-9 *not in* MSS. E, M; *added to* P

742-3 *so* 1827: And, looking round, I saw the corner stones

Till then unnotic'd, on either side the door MSS., 1814-20

748-9 Even at her threshold. The house-clock struck eight; MSS.

While on the board she spread our evening meal,  
 She told me—interrupting not the work  
 Which gave employment to her listless hands—  
 That she had parted with her elder child ; 760  
 To a kind master on a distant farm  
 Now happily apprenticed.—‘I perceive  
 You look at me, and you have cause ; to-day  
 I have been travelling far ; and many days  
 About the fields I wander, knowing this 765  
 Only, that what I seek I cannot find ;  
 And so I waste my time : for I am changed ;  
 And to myself,’ said she, ‘have done much wrong  
 And to this helpless infant. I have slept  
 Weeping, and weeping have I waked ; my tears 770  
 Have flowed as if my body were not such  
 As others are ; and I could never die.  
 But I am now in mind and in my heart  
 More easy ; and I hope,’ said she, ‘that God  
 Will give me patience to endure the things 775  
 Which I behold at home.’

It would have grieved

Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel  
 The story linger in my heart ; I fear  
 ‘Tis long and tedious ; but my spirit clings  
 To that poor Woman :—so familiarly 780  
 Do I perceive her manner, and her look,  
 And presence ; and so deeply do I feel  
 Her goodness, that, not seldom, in my walks  
 A momentary trance comes over me ;  
 And to myself I seem to muse on One 785  
 By sorrow laid asleep ; or borne away,  
 A human being destined to awake  
 To human life, or something very near  
 To human life, when he shall come again  
 For whom she suffered. Yes, it would have grieved 790  
 Your very soul to see her : evermore  
 Her eyelids drooped, her eyes downward were cast ;

758–62 She told me she had lost her elder Child,  
 That he for months had been a Serving-boy

Apprentic'd by the Parish. MSS. (MS. P *corr. to text*)

770 have I 1827: I have MSS., 1814–20 774 God 1832: Heaven  
 MSS., 1814–27 790 Yes,] Sir MSS. 792 downward were  
 1845: were downward 1814–43

And, when she at her table gave me food,  
 She did not look at me. Her voice was low,  
 Her body was subdued. In every act 795  
 Pertaining to her house-affairs, appeared  
 The careless stillness of a thinking mind  
 Self-occupied; to which all outward things  
 Are like an idle matter. Still she sighed,  
 But yet no motion of the breast was seen, 800  
 No heaving of the heart. While by the fire  
 We sate together, sighs came on my ear,  
 I knew not how, and hardly whence they came.

“Ere my departure, to her care I gave,  
 For her son’s use, some tokens of regard, 805  
 Which with a look of welcome she received;  
 And I exhorted her to place her trust  
 In God’s good love, and seek his help by prayer.  
 I took my staff, and, when I kissed her babe,  
 The tears stood in her eyes. I left her then 810  
 With the best hope and comfort I could give:  
 She thanked me for my wish;—but for my hope  
 It seemed she did not thank me.

I returned,  
 And took my rounds along this road again  
 When on its sunny bank the primrose flower 815  
 Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the Spring.  
 I found her sad and drooping: she had learned  
 No tidings of her husband; if he lived,  
 She knew not that he lived; if he were dead,  
 She knew not he was dead. She seemed the same 820  
 In person and appearance; but her house  
 Bespake a sleepy hand of negligence;  
 The floor was neither dry nor neat, the hearth  
 Was comfortless, and her small lot of books,

804–7 I gave her for her Son, the Parish Boy,

A kerchief and a book, wherewith she seem’d

Pleas’d; and I counsell’d her to have her trust MSS.

807 place 1827: have 1814–20 813 It seemed 1837: Methought

1814–32 815 When 1845: Ere MSS., 1814–43 816 so MS. M:

Had chronicled the earliest day of spring MS. E

817–18 drooping: Time had brought

No tidings which might lead her anxious mind

To a source of quiet; if her husband lived C

Which, in the cottage-window, heretofore 825  
 Had been piled up against the corner panes  
 In seemly order, now, with straggling leaves  
 Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,  
 As they had chanced to fall. Her infant Babe  
 Had from its mother caught the trick of grief, 830  
 And sighed among its playthings. I withdrew,  
 And once again entering the garden saw,  
 More plainly still, that poverty and grief  
 Were now come nearer to her: weeds defaced  
 The hardened soil, and knots of withered grass: 835  
 No ridges there appeared of clear black mold,  
 No winter greenness; of her herbs and flowers,  
 It seemed the better part were gnawed away  
 Or trampled into earth; a chain of straw,  
 Which had been twined about the slender stem 840  
 Of a young apple-tree, lay at its root;  
 The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.  
 —Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms,  
 And, noting that my eye was on the tree,  
 She said, 'I fear it will be dead and gone 845  
 Ere Robert come again.' When to the House  
 We had returned together, she enquired  
 If I had any hope:—but for her babe  
 And for her little orphan boy, she said,  
 She had no wish to live, that she must die 850  
 Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom  
 Still in its place; his Sunday garments hung  
 Upon the self-same nail; his very staff  
 Stood undisturbed behind the door.

And when,

In bleak December, I retraced this way, 855  
 She told me that her little babe was dead,  
 And she was left alone. She now, released

825 Which, one upon the other, heretofore MSS. 831-2 so 1845:  
 Once again I turn'd towards the garden-gate, and saw MSS., 1814-43  
 834-5 the earth was hard, With weeds defaced MSS. 846-7 Towards  
 the house Together we returned; and MSS., 1814-43 849 orphan]  
 friendless MSS. 855 I pass'd this way, beaten by autumn winds  
 MS. E: This way the ensuing winter I returned MSS. M, P  
 857-9 so MS. P: She now, I learn'd,  
 After her Infant's death had taken up  
 The employment common hereabouts, MSS. E, M

From her maternal cares, had taken up  
 The employment common through these wilds, and gained,  
 By spinning hemp, a pittance for herself; 860  
 And for this end had hired a neighbour's boy  
 To give her needful help. That very time  
 Most willingly she put her work aside,  
 And walked with me along the miry road,  
 Heedless how far; and, in such piteous sort 865  
 That any heart had ached to hear her, begged  
 That, wheresoe'er I went, I still would ask  
 For him whom she had lost. We parted then—  
 Our final parting; for from that time forth  
 Did many seasons pass ere I returned 870  
 Into this tract again.

Nine tedious years;  
 From their first separation, nine long years,  
 She lingered in unquiet widowhood;  
 A Wife and Widow. Needs must it have been  
 A sore heart-wasting! I have heard, my Friend, 875  
 That in yon arbour oftentimes she sate  
 Alone, through half the vacant sabbath day;  
 And, if a dog passed by, she still would quit  
 The shade, and look abroad. On this old bench  
 For hours she sate; and evermore her eye 880  
 Was busy in the distance, shaping things  
 That made her heart beat quick. You see that path,  
 Now faint,—the grass has crept o'er its grey line;  
 There, to and fro, she paced through many a day  
 Of the warm summer, from a belt of hemp 885  
 That girt her waist, spinning the long-drawn thread  
 With backward steps. Yet ever as there passed  
 A man whose garments showed the soldier's red,  
 Or crippled mendicant in sailor's garb,  
 The little child who sate to turn the wheel 890  
 Ceased from his task; and she with faltering voice  
 Made many a fond enquiry; and when they,  
 Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by,

862 To help her in her work MSS. 864-5 And walked with me a  
 mile, and in such sort MSS. 871 Nine] Five MSS. B-D

876-7 That in yon broken arbour she would sit

The idle length of half a Sabbath day MSS.

891/2 Expecting still to hear her Husband's fate, MSS. E, M

Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate,  
 That bars the traveller's road, she often stood, 895  
 And when a stranger horseman came, the latch  
 Would lift, and in his face look wistfully:  
 Most happy, if, from aught discovered there  
 Of tender feeling, she might dare repeat  
 The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor Hut 900  
 Sank to decay; for he was gone, whose hand,  
 At the first nipping of October frost,  
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw  
 Chequered the green-grown thatch. And so she lived  
 Through the long winter, reckless and alone; 905  
 Until her house by frost, and thaw, and rain,  
 Was sapped; and while she slept, the nightly damps  
 Did chill her breast; and in the stormy day  
 Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind,  
 Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still 910  
 She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds  
 Have parted hence; and still that length of road,  
 And this rude bench, one torturing hope endeared,  
 Fast rooted at her heart: and here, my Friend,—  
 In sickness she remained; and here she died; 915  
 Last human tenant of these ruined walls!"

The old Man ceased: he saw that I was moved;  
 From that low bench, rising instinctively  
 I turned aside in weakness, nor had power  
 To thank him for the tale which he had told. 920  
 I stood, and leaning o'er the garden wall  
 Reviewed that Woman's sufferings; and it seemed  
 To comfort me while with a brother's love  
 I blessed her in the impotence of grief.  
 Then towards the cottage I returned; and traced 925

905-6 In objects of her need and of her love  
 Made poorer every day till at the last  
 The loom was parted with and nothing left  
 But naked walls where joyless and alone  
 Through the long winter long and desolate  
 She linger'd in neglect and unconcern  
 Until her house *etc.* MS. E *alt. draft*

921 wall MS. M: gate MSS. D-P

925-6 *so* 1837: At length towards the Cottage I returned  
 Fondly,—and trac'd with milder interest MSS. 1814-32  
 (*but P and 1814-32 interest more mild*)

Fondly, though with an interest more mild,  
 That secret spirit of humanity  
 Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies  
 Of nature, 'mid her plants, and weeds, and flowers,  
 And silent overgrowings, still survived. 930  
 The old Man, noting this, resumed, and said,  
 "My Friend! enough to sorrow you have given,  
 The purposes of wisdom ask no more:  
 Nor more would she have craved as due to One  
 Who, in her worst distress, had oft-times felt 935  
 The unbounded might of prayer; and learned, with soul  
 Fixed on the Cross, that consolation springs,  
 From sources deeper far than deepest pain,  
 For the meek Sufferer. Why then should we read  
 The forms of things with an unworthy eye? 940  
 She sleeps in the calm earth, and peace is here.  
 I well remember that those very plumes,  
 Those weeds, and the high spear-grass on that wall,  
 By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,  
 As once I passed, into my heart conveyed 945  
 So still an image of tranquillity,  
 So calm and still, and looked so beautiful  
 Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind,  
 That what we feel of sorrow and despair  
 From ruin and from change, and all the grief 950  
 That passing shows of Being leave behind,  
 Appeared an idle dream, that could maintain,  
 Nowhere, dominion o'er the enlightened spirit  
 Whose meditative sympathies repose  
 Upon the breast of Faith. I turned away, 955  
 And walked along my road in happiness."

He ceased. Ere long the sun declining shot  
 A slant and mellow radiance, which began  
 To fall upon us, while, beneath the trees,  
 We sate on that low bench: and now we felt, 960

934-7 Doubt not that oft-times in her soul she felt

The unbounded might of prayer. Upon her knees

Was taught that heavenly consolation springs C

934-40 so 1845: Be wise and chearful, and no longer read

The forms of things with an unworthy eye MSS., 1814-43

945 so 1837: did to my heart convey MSS., 1814-32

952-5 so

1845: that could not live Where meditation was. MSS., 1814-43

Admonished thus, the sweet hour coming on.  
A linnet warbled from those lofty elms,  
A thrush sang loud, and other melodies,  
At distance heard, peopled the milder air.  
The old Man rose, and, with a sprightly mien 965  
Of hopeful preparation, grasped his staff;  
Together casting then a farewell look  
Upon those silent walls, we left the shade;  
And, ere the stars were visible, had reached  
A village-inn,—our evening resting-place. 970

965-6 The old Man rose and hoisted [*corr. to lifted*] up his load MSS.:  
P *corr. to text*

## BOOK SECOND

### THE SOLITARY

#### ARGUMENT

The Author describes his travels with the Wanderer, whose character is further illustrated.—Morning scene, and view of a Village Wake.—Wanderer's account of a Friend whom he purposes to visit.—View, from an eminence, of the Valley which his Friend had chosen for his retreat.<sup>1</sup>—Sound of singing from below.—A funeral procession.—Descent into the Valley.—Observations drawn from the Wanderer at sight of a book accidentally discovered in a recess in the Valley.—Meeting with the Wanderer's friend, the Solitary.—Wanderer's description of the mode of burial in this mountainous district.—Solitary contrasts with this, that of the individual carried a few minutes before from the cottage.<sup>2</sup>—The cottage entered.—Description of the Solitary's apartment.—Repast there.—View, from the window, of two mountain summits; and the Solitary's description of the companionship they afford him.—Account of the departed inmate of the cottage.—Description of a grand spectacle upon the mountains, with its effect upon the Solitary's mind.—Leave<sup>3</sup> the house.

In days of yore how fortunately fared  
 The Minstrel! wandering on from hall to hall,  
 Baronial court or royal; cheered with gifts  
 Munificent, and love, and ladies' praise;  
 Now meeting on his road an armed knight, 5  
 Now resting with a pilgrim by the side  
 Of a clear brook;—beneath an abbey's roof  
 One evening sumptuously lodged; the next,  
 Humbly in a religious hospital;  
 Or with some merry outlaws of the wood; 10  
 Or haply shrouded in a hermit's cell.  
 Him, sleeping or awake, the robber spared;

II. <sup>1</sup> *so* 1837: retreat—feelings of the Author at the sight of it—1814–32  
<sup>2</sup> *so* 1837: cottage—Brief conversation—1814–32 <sup>3</sup> Leave 1837:  
 Quit 1814–32

1 yore] old X 6–7 A pilgrim now within an Abbey lodged X  
 8 . . . sumptuously, the next perhaps X 12 Him savage robbers  
 spared, asleep or wake MS.  
 12–27 Withal from Robbers and from danger safe,  
 By melody and by the charm of verse,  
 And with his Harp still pendent at his side  
 Familiarly as now our Labourers wear  
 Their Satchels when they plod to distant fields;  
 Yet such an one so favour'd could not draw  
 By his glad faculties more earnest bliss

He walked—protected from the sword of war  
 By virtue of that sacred instrument  
 His harp, suspended at the traveller's side; 15  
 His dear companion wheresoe'er he went  
 Opening from land to land an easy way  
 By melody, and by the charm of verse.  
 Yet not the noblest of that honoured Race  
 Drew happier, loftier, more empassioned, thoughts 20  
 From his long journeyings and eventful life,  
 Than this obscure Itinerant had skill  
 To gather, ranging through the tamer ground  
 Of these our unimaginate days;  
 Both while he trod the earth in humblest guise 25  
 Accoutred with his burthen and his staff;  
 And now, when free to move with lighter pace.

What wonder, then, if I, whose favourite school  
 Hath been the fields, the roads, and rural lanes,  
 Looked on this guide with reverential love? 30

From the eventful and wayfaring life  
 Than this same Man uncountenanc'd and obscure,  
 Accoutred with a Burthen and a Staff,  
 And nothing better, had the skill to draw  
 By grace of Heaven from many a ramble, far  
 And wide protracted, through the tamer land  
 Of these our unimaginate Days; X

15 traveller's] Wanderer's MS. 20 loftier] purer MS. 21  
 journeyings] travels MS.

22-3 so 1827: Than this obscure Itinerant (an obscure  
 But a high-souled and tender-hearted Man)  
 [Accoutred with his burden and his staff, MS.]  
 Had skill to draw from many a ramble, far  
 And wide protracted, through the tamer ground MS.,  
 1814-20

25-7 MS. omits

28-90 He was a Man whom many sympathies  
 Had made me cleave to, and we now pursued  
 Our journey beneath favorable Heavens  
 At leisure, resting, reading in the shade,  
 Or talking of such matters as occurred;  
 But when the sun had for the third time risen  
 My Fellow-traveller said with earnest voice  
 As if the thought were but a moment old  
 That, leaving all encumbrances behind,  
 The day should be a day of Liberty,  
 And I must yield myself without reserve  
 To his disposal. Glad was I of this,  
 We started and he led towards etc. X

29/30 And pathways winding on from farm to farm MS., 1814-20

Each with the other pleased, we now pursued  
 Our journey, under favourable skies.  
 Turn wheresoe'er we would, he was a light  
 Unfailing: not a hamlet could we pass,  
 Rarely a house, that did not yield to him 35  
 Remembrances; or from his tongue call forth  
 Some way-beguiling tale. Nor less regard  
 Accompanied those strains of apt discourse,  
 Which nature's various objects might inspire;  
 And in the silence of his face I read 40  
 His overflowing spirit. Birds and beasts,  
 And the mute fish that glances in the stream,  
 And harmless reptile coiling in the sun,  
 And gorgeous insect hovering in the air,  
 The fowl domestic, and the household dog— 45  
 In his capacious mind, he loved them all:  
 Their rights acknowledging he felt for all.  
 Oft was occasion given me to perceive  
 How the calm pleasures of the pasturing herd  
 To happy contemplation soothed his walk; 50  
 How the poor brute's condition, forced to run  
 Its course of suffering in the public road,  
 Sad contrast! all too often smote his heart  
 With unavailing pity. Rich in love  
 And sweet humanity, he was, himself, 55  
 To the degree that he desired, beloved.  
 Smiles of good-will from faces that he knew  
 Greeted us all day long; we took our seats  
 By many a cottage-hearth, where he received  
 The welcome of an Inmate from afar, 60

32 under 1837: beneath MS., 1814-32

36-90 Remembrances, while monitory hints

By nature's various objects were supplied  
 For apt discourse, and way-beguiling tales  
 Perpetually were flowing from his tongue.  
 Greetings and smiles we met with all day long  
 From faces that he knew: we took our seats  
 By many a cottage hearth, where he received  
 The welcome of an Inmate come from far.

But when the sun . . . led towards *etc.* as X, MS.

39 inspire 1827: supply 1814-20 50/1 Along the field, and in the  
 shady grove MS., 1814-20 60 from afar 1845: come from far  
 MS., 1814-43

And I at once forgot I was a Stranger. 1  
 —Nor was he loth to enter ragged huts,  
 Huts where his charity was blest; his voice  
 Heard as the voice of an experienced friend.  
 And, sometimes—where the poor man held dispute 65  
 With his own mind, unable to subdue  
 Impatience through inaptness to perceive  
 General distress in his particular lot;  
 Or cherishing resentment, or in vain  
 Struggling against it; with a soul perplexed, 70  
 And finding in herself no steady power  
 To draw the line of comfort that divides  
 Calamity, the chastisement of Heaven,  
 From the injustice of our brother men—  
 To him appeal was made as to a judge; 75  
 Who, with an understanding heart, allayed  
 The perturbation; listened to the plea;  
 Resolved the dubious point; and sentence gave  
 So grounded, so applied, that it was heard  
 With softened spirit, even when it condemned. 80

Such intercourse I witnessed, while we roved,  
 Now as his choice directed, now as mine;  
 Or both, with equal readiness of will,  
 Our course submitting to the changeful breeze  
 Of accident. But when the rising sun 85  
 Had three times called us to renew our walk,  
 My Fellow-traveller, with earnest voice,  
 As if the thought were but a moment old,  
 Claimed absolute dominion for the day.  
 We started—and he led me toward the hills, 90  
 Up through an ample vale, with higher hills  
 Before us, mountains stern and desolate;  
 But, in the majesty of distance, now

61 *added* 1845      63 *so* 1827: Wherein his MS., 1814–20      71 *herself*  
 1827: *itself* MS., 1814–20      87–9 *so* 1832: 87 *as above* (*see* 28–90),  
 88 *as text, followed by* That I must yield myself *etc. as above* 1814–27  
 90 *led me toward* 1837: *led towards* MS., 1814–32      92 *At distance, crags austere and desolate, X here goes on at l. 318 (a version of ll. 164–317 being introduced later)*

92–6 *Another MS. has 92 as X, followed by*

Now beautiful by morning's radiant light *corr. to*  
 But now array'd in morning's cheerful light

Set off, and to our ken appearing fair  
 Of aspect, with ærial softness clad, 95  
 And beautified with morning's purple beams.

The wealthy, the luxurious, by the stress  
 Of business roused, or pleasure, ere their time,  
 May roll in chariots, or provoke the hoofs  
 Of the fleet coursers they bestride, to raise 100  
 From earth the dust of morning, slow to rise;  
 And they, if blest with health and hearts at ease,  
 Shall lack not their enjoyment:—but how faint  
 Compared with ours! who, pacing side by side,  
 Could, with an eye of leisure, look on all 105  
 That we beheld; and lend the listening sense  
 To every grateful sound of earth and air;  
 Pausing at will—our spirits braced, our thoughts  
 Pleasant as roses in the thickets blown,  
 And pure as dew bathing their crimson leaves. 110

Mount slowly, sun! that we may journey long,  
 By this dark hill protected from thy beams!  
 Such is the summer pilgrim's frequent wish;  
 But quickly from among our morning thoughts  
 'Twas chased away: for, toward the western side 115  
 Of the broad vale, casting a casual glance,  
 We saw a throng of people;—wherefore met?  
 Blithe notes of music, suddenly let loose  
 On the thrilled ear, and flags uprising, yield  
 Prompt answer; they proclaim the annual Wake, 120  
 Which the bright season favours.—Tabor and pipe  
 In purpose join to hasten or reprove  
 The laggard Rustic; and repay with boons  
 Of merriment a party-coloured knot,

111–14 so 1827: Mount slowly Sun! and may our journey lie  
 Awhile within the shadow of this hill,  
 This friendly hill, a shelter from thy beams!  
 Such is the summer Pilgrim's frequent wish;  
 And as that wish, with prevalence of thanks  
 For present good o'er fear of future ill,  
 Stole in among the morning's blither thoughts, MS.,  
 1814–20

115 'Twas banished for towards, *corr. to text with tow'rds (so also 1814–20)*  
*for toward* MS. 119 so 1827: ear, did to the [this MS.] question  
 yield MS., 1814–20

Already formed upon the village-green. 125  
 —Beyond the limits of the shadow cast  
 By the broad hill, glistened upon our sight  
 That gay assemblage. Round them and above,  
 Glitter, with dark recesses interposed,  
 Casement, and cottage-roof, and stems of trees 130  
 Half-veiled in vapoury cloud, the silver steam  
 Of dews fast melting on their leafy boughs  
 By the strong sunbeams smitten. Like a mast  
 Of gold, the Maypole shines; as if the rays  
 Of morning, aided by exhaling dew, 135  
 With gladsome influence could re-animate  
 The faded garlands dangling from its sides.

Said I, "The music and the sprightly scene  
 Invite us; shall we quit our road, and join  
 These festive matins?"—He replied, "Not loth 140  
 To linger I would here with you partake,  
 Not one hour merely, but till evening's close,  
 The simple pastimes of the day and place.  
 By the fleet Racers, ere the sun be set,  
 The turf of yon large pasture will be skimmed; 145  
 There, too, the lusty Wrestlers shall contend:  
 But know we not that he, who intermits  
 The appointed task and duties of the day,  
 Untunes full oft the pleasures of the day;  
 Checking the finer spirits that refuse 150  
 To flow, when purposes are lightly changed?  
 A length of journey yet remains untraced:  
 Let us proceed." Then, pointing with his staff  
 Raised toward those craggy summits, his intent  
 He thus imparted:—

"In a spot that lies 155

141 so 1845: Here would I linger and MS., 1814-43

152-3 so 1845: We must proceed—a length of journey yet  
 Remains untraced. MS., 1814-43

153-8 As up this Vale we journeyed side by side  
 My Fellow-traveller, pointing as he spoke,  
 Made known his purpose: To a spot that lies  
 Concealed among yon mountain solitudes  
 I shall conduct you to receive, I hope,  
 Ere noon, a recompense of this day's toil MS.

154 Raised toward 1832: Towards 1814-27

Among yon mountain fastnesses concealed,  
 You will receive, before the hour of noon,  
 Good recompense, I hope, for this day's toil,  
 From sight of One who lives secluded there,  
 Lonesome and lost: of whom, and whose past life, 160  
 (Not to forestall such knowledge as may be  
 More faithfully collected from himself)  
 This brief communication shall suffice.

“Though now sojourning there, he, like myself,  
 Sprang from a stock of lowly parentage 165

161 forestall] foretaste MS., *corr. to text*

164-82 There, though sequestered, he was, like myself,  
 Born in the hills of Scotland—we had this  
 In common too, that both were sprung from poor  
 And lowly parentage; his time of youth  
 In piety and innocence was spent;  
 And as he shewed in study forward zeal  
 All helps were sought, all means were strain'd that he,  
 By due scholastic discipline prepared,  
 Might to the Ministry be called; which done,  
 Partly through lack of better hopes, and part,  
 Perhaps, incited by a curious mind,  
 In early life the charge he undertook  
 Of spiritual guide and teacher to a band  
 Of Highlanders who to the Bagpipes marched  
 In plaided vest, his fellow-countrymen,  
 This humble station filling—to the world  
 Such seemed it, to his Comrades and himself;  
 But stored with learning and by native power  
 And force *etc. as text* 179-81. . . vanity, and prompt meanwhile  
 In every generous feeling, among these  
 Gay *etc.* MS. 58

164-221 (*v. app. crit. to 487-91*)

Born on the hills of Scotland, we had this  
 In common, too, that both of us were sprung  
 From poor and lowly parentage, and hence,  
 And from some noble personal qualities,  
 He had awaken'd in me more concern  
 Than might seem just; yet not so, for his powers  
 Were bright and rare; but let me be more brief.  
 In piety and innocence he spent  
 A studious youth, and after proper course  
 Of studies to the Ministry was called,  
 And went abroad for lack of better hopes  
 As military Chaplain to a band  
 Of Highlanders, his fellow countrymen.  
 In knowledge first, in talents far the first,

Among the wilds of Scotland, in a tract  
 Where many a sheltered and well-tended plant  
 Bears, on the humblest ground of social life,  
 Blossoms of piety and innocence.  
 Such grateful promises his youth displayed: 170  
 And, having shown in study forward zeal,  
 He to the Ministry was duly called ;  
 And straight, incited by a curious mind  
 Filled with vague hopes, he undertook the charge  
 Of Chaplain to a military troop 175  
 Cheered by the Highland bagpipe, as they marched  
 In plaided vest,—his fellow-countrymen.  
 This office filling, yet by native power  
 And force of native inclination made  
 An intellectual ruler in the haunts 180  
 Of social vanity, he walked the world,  
 Gay, and affecting graceful gaiety ;  
 Lax, buoyant—less a pastor with his flock  
 Than a soldier among soldiers—lived and roamed  
 Where Fortune led:—and Fortune, who oft proves 185  
 The careless wanderer's friend, to him made known  
 A blooming Lady—a conspicuous flower,  
 Admired for beauty, for her sweetness praised ;  
 Whom he had sensibility to love,  
 Ambition to attempt, and skill to win. 190

Subject to vanities, yet powerful  
 In every generous feeling, among these  
 [? Young] ardent, less a pastor with his Flock  
 Than a soldier among soldiers, many years  
 He went where Fortune led. But nobler days  
 Open'd upon him, and a nobler life.  
 The vision that enchanted all mankind  
 Save some few selfish hearts, appeared in France,  
 Him did it rouse to a surpassing joy  
 Who was by nature fervent to disease.  
 He broke from out his narrow sphere, repaired  
 To London, then a fountain of great hopes,  
 And there with popular talents preach'd the cause  
 Of Christ and of the new-born Liberty X

168-9 so 1827: Upon the humblest ground of social life,

Doth at this day, I trust, the blossoms bear

Of piety and simple innocence MS., 1814-20

171-4 so 1827: 1814-20 as MS. above 178 yet 1827: and 1814-20

185-215 Where Fortune led. But more ambitious aims

Opened upon him, and more dazzling views

The vision etc. . . . repaired as X

"For this fair Bride, most rich in gifts of mind,  
 Nor sparingly endowed with worldly wealth,  
 His office he relinquished ; and retired  
 From the world's notice to a rural home.  
 Youth's season yet with him was scarcely past, 195  
 And she was in youth's prime. How free their love,  
 How full their joy! Till, pitiable doom!  
 In the short course of one undreaded year,  
 Death blasted all. Death suddenly o'erthrew  
 Two lovely Children—all that they possessed! 200  
 The Mother followed:—miserably bare  
 The one Survivor stood ; he wept, he prayed  
 For his dismissal, day and night, compelled  
 To hold communion with the grave, and face  
 With pain the regions of eternity. 205  
 An uncomplaining apathy displaced  
 This anguish ; and, indifferent to delight,  
 To aim and purpose, he consumed his days,  
 To private interest dead, and public care.  
 So lived he ; so he might have died.  
 But now, 210  
 To the wide world's astonishment, appeared  
 A glorious opening, the unlooked-for dawn,  
 That promised everlasting joy to France!  
 Her voice of social transport reached even him!  
 He broke from his contracted bounds, repaired 215  
 To the great City, an emporium then  
 Of golden expectations, and receiving  
 Freights every day from a new world of hope.  
 Thither his popular talents he transferred ;  
 And, from the pulpit, zealously maintained 220  
 The cause of Christ and civil liberty,

196-7 so 1845: . . . How full their joy

How free their love! nor did [their 1814-20] that love decay  
 Nor joy abate till, pitiable doom! 1814-43

204-5 so 1845: By pain to turn his thoughts towards the grave  
 And face MS., 1814-43

To commune with the grave, soul-sick, and face C

212 A glorious 1827: The glorious MS., 1814-20

213/14 That sudden light had power to pierce the gloom  
 In which his Spirit, friendless upon earth,  
 In separation dwelt, and solitude. MS., 1814-20

214 Her] The MS., 1814-20

As one, and moving to one glorious end.  
 Intoxicating service! I might say  
 A happy service; for he was sincere  
 As vanity and fondness for applause, 225  
 And new and shapeless wishes, would allow.

“That righteous cause (such power hath freedom) bound,  
 For one hostility, in friendly league,  
 Ethereal natures and the worst of slaves;  
 Was served by rival advocates that came 230  
 From regions opposite as heaven and hell.  
 One courage seemed to animate them all:  
 And, from the dazzling conquests daily gained  
 By their united efforts, there arose  
 A proud and most presumptuous confidence 235  
 In the transcendent wisdom of the age,  
 And her discernment; not alone in rights,  
 And in the origin and bounds of power  
 Social and temporal; but in laws divine,  
 Deduced by reason, or to faith revealed. 240  
 An overweening trust was raised; and fear  
 Cast out, alike of person and of thing.  
 Plague from this union spread, whose subtle bane  
 The strongest did not easily escape;  
 And He, what wonder! took a mortal taint. 245  
 How shall I trace the change, how bear to tell

223 I might say] more than that X

227-8 so 1827: Cause of freedom, did, we know,

Combine, for one hostility, as friends, MS., 1814-20: That  
 righteous and most holy cause, we know, Combined X

230 by rival] as seemed, by X 233 dazzling] flattering MS.

233-42 not in X 234 arose] sprang forth MS.

239-43 . . . but in nature's laws

And in the eternal government of things,  
 Religion's high immunity, the grants  
 Of faith to chosen lands vouchsafed, or those  
 By Deity committed to the heart  
 O'er the wide plain of universal earth,  
 Man's spiritual hopes, dependencies and needs.  
 An overweening confidence was raised  
 That cast out fear of person and of thing  
 [In well intentioned minds to action raised]  
 Plague from this union spread etc. MS. 58

243 Plagues followed on such mixture spreading plagues X

That he broke faith with them whom he had laid  
 In earth's dark chambers, with a Christian's hope!  
 An infidel contempt of holy writ  
 Stole by degrees upon his mind; and hence 250  
 Life, like that Roman Janus, double-faced;  
 Vilest hypocrisy—the laughing, gay  
 Hypocrisy, not leagued with fear, but pride.  
 Smooth words he had to wheedle simple souls;  
 But, for disciples of the inner school, 255  
 Old freedom was old servitude, and they  
 The wisest whose opinions stooped the least  
 To known restraints; and who most boldly drew  
 Hopeful prognostications from a creed,  
 That, in the light of false philosophy, 260  
 Spread like a halo round a misty moon,  
 Widening its circle as the storms advance.

“His sacred function was at length renounced;  
 And every day and every place enjoyed  
 The unshackled layman's natural liberty; 265  
 Speech, manners, morals, all without disguise.  
 I do not wish to wrong him; though the course  
 Of private life licentiously displayed  
 Unhallowed actions—planted like a crown  
 Upon the insolent aspiring brow 270  
 Of spurious notions—worn as open signs  
 Of prejudice subdued—still he retained,

249 holy writ] sacred truth MS. 58 250/1 For him and for his individual harm MS. 58

258–60 To tried authority and known restraints  
 Whose creed, with sorrow be it said, [for this at bottom was the  
 truth X]

Did in the light *etc.* MSS

263 Although his sacred function was abjured MS. 58 263–6 *not in X*

267–9 I do not wish to wrong him, though the course  
 Of private life was sullied and disgraced  
 By evil actions . . . MS. 58

267–72 for his heart

Was generously disposed, and he retained MS. 58 *alt.*

267–73 I would not wrong him, for he was a man  
 Of generous wishes, and retained in midst  
 Of such abasement *etc.* X

272 *so* 1837: he still MS., 1814–32

'Mid much abasement, what he had received  
 From nature, an intense and glowing mind.  
 Wherefore, when humbled Liberty grew weak, 275  
 And mortal sickness on her face appeared,  
 He coloured objects to his own desire  
 As with a lover's passion. Yet his moods  
 Of pain were keen as those of better men,  
 Nay keener, as his fortitude was less: 280  
 And he continued, when worse days were come,  
 To deal about his sparkling eloquence,  
 Struggling against the strange reverse with zeal  
 That showed like happiness. But, in despite  
 Of all this outside bravery, within, 285  
 He neither felt encouragement nor hope:  
 For moral dignity, and strength of mind,  
 Were wanting; and simplicity of life;  
 And reverence for himself; and, last and best,  
 Confiding thoughts, through love and fear of Him 290  
 Before whose sight the troubles of this world  
 Are vain, as billows in a tossing sea.

"The glory of the times fading away—  
 The splendor, which had given a festal air  
 To self-importance, hallowed it, and veiled 295  
 From his own sight—this gone, he forfeited  
 All joy in human nature; was consumed,  
 And vexed, and chafed, by levity and scorn,  
 And fruitless indignation; galled by pride;  
 Made desperate by contempt of men who throve 300  
 Before his sight in power or fame, and won,  
 Without desert, what he desired; weak men,  
 Too weak even for his envy or his hate!

273 much 1837: such MS., 1814-32 275 And when the strength of  
 liberty decayed MSS. 287 dignity] fortitude X

290-2 The love and fear of God, the sense of God

Sole feeling by the which we can sustain

True comprehensiveness of intellect. X

290 through 1827: and MS., 1814-20

296 so 1827: . . . this gone, therewith he lost 1814-20: From sight of his  
 own eyes—this gone, he lost MSS. 298 And toss'd about by levity

and spleen X 300 throve] gained X 301 not in X

Tormented thus, after a wandering course  
 Of discontent, and inwardly oppress 305  
 With malady—in part, I fear, provoked  
 By weariness of life—he fixed his home,  
 Or, rather say, sate down by very chance,  
 Among these rugged hills; where now he dwells,  
 And wastes the sad remainder of his hours, 310  
 Steeped in a self-indulging spleen, that wants not  
 Its own voluptuousness;—on this resolved,  
 With this content, that he will live and die  
 Forgotten,—at safe distance from ‘a world  
 Not moving to his mind.’ ”

These serious words 315  
 Closed the preparatory notices  
 That served my Fellow-traveller to beguile  
 The way, while we advanced up that wide vale.  
 Diverging now (as if his quest had been  
 Some secret of the mountains, cavern, fall 320  
 Of water, or some lofty eminence,  
 Renowned for splendid prospect far and wide)  
 We scaled, without a track to ease our steps,  
 A steep ascent; and reached a dreary plain,  
 With a tumultuous waste of huge hill tops 325

304–5 *so* 1827: —And thus beset, and finding in himself  
 No pleasure nor tranquillity, at last,  
 After a wandering course of discontent  
 In foreign lands, and *etc.* MS., 1814–20

304–14 And thus beset . . . at last (*as above*)  
 For want of better prospect he withdrew  
 Into this place, as farthest from a world X

311 *so* 1845: In Self-indulging spleen, that doth not want MS., 1814–43

318–19 X *goes on here (from l. 90)*

Along this Vale till noontide we advanc'd  
 When suddenly upturning he began  
 To climb upon one side of it, a ridge  
 Of steep ascent, his object being, I guessed, X

319 *so* 1827: Now, suddenly diverging, he began

To climb upon its western side a ridge  
 Pathless and smooth, a long and steep ascent;

As if the object of his quest had been 1814–20: *as* MS., *but*  
 upturning for diverging and one side of it for its western side

321 some lofty 1845: some boastful MS., 1814–43: conspicuous C

323 Scaled . . . ease 1827: clomb . . . guide MSS., 1814–20 324 *so*

1827: And, on the summit, reached a heathy plain MSS., 1814–20

Before us ; savage region ! which I paced  
 Dispirited : when, all at once, behold !  
 Beneath our feet, a little lowly vale,  
 A lowly vale, and yet uplifted high  
 Among the mountains ; even as if the spot 330  
 Had been from eldest time by wish of theirs  
 So placed, to be shut out from all the world !  
 Urn-like it was in shape, deep as an urn ;  
 With rocks encompassed, save that to the south  
 Was one small opening, where a heath-clad ridge 335  
 Supplied a boundary less abrupt and close ;  
 A quiet treeless nook, with two green fields,  
 A liquid pool that glittered in the sun,  
 And one bare dwelling ; one abode, no more !  
 It seemed the home of poverty and toil, 340  
 Though not of want : the little fields, made green  
 By husbandry of many thrifty years,  
 Paid cheerful tribute to the moorland house.  
 —There crows the cock, single in his domain :  
 The small birds find in spring no thicket there 345  
 To shroud them ; only from the neighbouring vales  
 The cuckoo, straggling up to the hill tops,  
 Shouteth faint tidings of some gladder place.

Ah ! what a sweet Recess, thought I, is here !  
 Instantly throwing down my limbs at ease 350  
 Upon a bed of heath ;—full many a spot  
 Of hidden beauty have I chanced to espy  
 Among the mountains ; never one like this ;  
 So lonesome, and so perfectly secure ;  
 Not melancholy—no, for it is green, 355  
 And bright, and fertile, furnished in itself  
 With the few needful things that life requires.  
 —In rugged arms how softly does it lie,  
 How tenderly protected ! Far and near  
 We have an image of the pristine earth, 360  
 The planet in its nakedness : were this

326-7 . . . and I walked In weariness MSS., 1814-20

334-6 Encompassed round about with highest rocks

Which, but in one small opening, to the south

Sloped gently back ; elsewhere abrupt and close. MSS.

358 softly does it 1837: soft it seems to MSS., 1814-32

Man's only dwelling, sole appointed seat,  
 First, last, and single, in the breathing world,  
 It could not be more quiet: peace is here  
 Or nowhere; days unruffled by the gale 365  
 Of public news or private; years that pass  
 Forgetfully; uncalled upon to pay  
 The common penalties of mortal life,  
 Sickness, or accident, or grief, or pain.

On these and kindred thoughts intent I lay 370  
 In silence musing by my Comrade's side,  
 He also silent; when from out the heart  
 Of that profound abyss a solemn voice,  
 Or several voices in one solemn sound,  
 Was heard ascending; mournful, deep, and slow 375  
 The cadence, as of psalms—a funeral dirge!  
 We listened, looking down upon the hut,  
 But seeing no one: meanwhile from below  
 The strain continued, spiritual as before;  
 And now distinctly could I recognise 380  
 These words:—"Shall in the grave thy love be known,  
 In death thy faithfulness?"—"God rest his soul!"  
 Said the old man, abruptly breaking silence,—  
 "He is departed, and finds peace at last!"

This scarcely spoken, and those holy strains 385  
 Not ceasing, forth appeared in view a band  
 Of rustic persons, from behind the hut  
 Bearing a coffin in the midst, with which  
 They shaped their course along the sloping side  
 Of that small valley, singing as they moved; 390  
 A sober company and few, the men  
 Bare-headed, and all decently attired!

363/4 Without a fellow, near it or remote MSS.

370-1 so 1827: On these and other kindred thoughts intent

In silence by my Comrade's side I lay MSS., 1814-20

376 funeral dirge] psalm of death MSS. 377 upon 1827: towards  
 MSS., 1814-20

382-3

Belike those words

Said my companion, sighing as he spoke,

Were chosen by himself. God rest his soul, C

383 Said the old man 1845: The old Man exclaimed MSS.: The Wan-  
 derer cried 1814-43 384 He is then dead, and hath found [God

give him X] MSS.

385 He scarce had spoken when MSS.

Some steps when they had thus advanced, the dirge  
 Ended; and, from the stillness that ensued  
 Recovering, to my Friend I said, "You spake, 395  
 Methought, with apprehension that these rites  
 Are paid to Him upon whose shy retreat  
 This day we purposed to intrude."—"I did so.  
 But let us hence, that we may learn the truth:  
 Perhaps it is not he but some one else 400  
 For whom this pious service is performed;  
 Some other tenant of the solitude."

So, to a steep and difficult descent  
 Trusting ourselves, we wound from crag to crag,  
 Where passage could be won; and, as the last 405  
 Of the mute train, behind the heathy top  
 Of that off-sloping outlet, disappeared,  
 I, more impatient in my downward course,  
 Had landed upon easy ground; and there  
 Stood waiting for my Comrade. When behold 410  
 An object that enticed my steps aside!  
 A narrow, winding entry opened out  
 Into a platform—that lay, sheepfold-wise,  
 Enclosed between an upright mass of rock  
 And one old moss-grown wall;—a cool recess, 415  
 And fanciful! For where the rock and wall  
 Met in an angle, hung a penthouse, framed

- 396-9 I fancied with emotion, as of one  
 Who must have been well known to you. He was so,  
 But let us to the House, for I would have  
 Assurance of the manner of his death X
- 398 so. 1814: so, 1820-50 400 He is it not perhaps but C  
 405-6 . . . as [while X] the train Who bore the body, having gained  
 [reach'd X] the top MSS. 408 so 1827: in the course I took MSS.,  
 1814-20 408-9 I landed upon easy ground, and there X
- 412 so 1827: It was an Entry, narrow as a door;  
 A passage whose brief windings (Which after some short  
 windings) opened out MSS., 1814-20
- 413 . . . that by work of chance, As seemed, and not design, lay *etc.* MSS.  
 414 an upright 1827: a single MSS., 1814-20
- 415-16 And one stone wall. The floor was smooth and green  
 And the small compass of the space within  
 Shut out from view of anything but sky  
 And passing clouds; and where the rock and wall MSS.
- 417 so 1827: . . . hung a tiny roof  
 Or penthouse which most quaintly had been framed MSS.,  
 1814-20

By thrusting two rude staves into the wall  
 And overlaying them with mountain sods ;  
 To weather-fend a little turf-built seat 420  
 Whereon a full-grown man might rest, nor dread  
 The burning sunshine, or a transient shower ;  
 But the whole plainly wrought by children's hands !  
 Whose skill had thronged the floor with a proud show  
 Of baby-houses, curiously arranged ; 425  
 Nor wanting ornament of walks between,  
 With mimic trees inserted in the turf,  
 And gardens interposed. Pleased with the sight,  
 I could not choose but beckon to my Guide,  
 Who, entering, round him threw a careless glance 430  
 Impatient to pass on, when I exclaimed,  
 "Lo! what is here?" and, stooping down, drew forth  
 A book, that, in the midst of stones and moss  
 And wreck of party-coloured earthenware,  
 Aptly disposed, had lent its help to raise 435  
 One of those petty structures. "His it must be!"  
 Exclaimed the Wanderer, "cannot but be his,  
 And he is gone!" The book, which in my hand  
 Had opened of itself (for it was swoln  
 With searching damp, and seemingly had lain 440  
 To the injurious elements exposed  
 From week to week,) I found to be a work

418 staves 1827: sticks MSS., 1814-20

420-2 Screen for a low sod seat beneath, a seat  
 On which a man of stature tall might rest  
 [beneath, of width

And barely so, to hold a full-grown Man, X]

Scantily sheltered from a transient shower MSS.

424 so 1827: Whose simple skill had thronged the grassy floor

With work of frame less solid, a proud show 1814-20

424-31 And here and there the grassy floor was thronged

With baby-houses, chiefly small loose stones

Together ranged in circle or in square.

The old Man who, to my summons giving way,

Had entered, looked about him carelessly

And now would have passed on *etc.* MSS.

430-1 so 1827: Who having entered, carelessly looked round,

And now *etc.* as MS., 1814-20

435 Placed as they came to hand, had helped to make MS.: Finding a useful place . . . build X 436-7 so 1845: "Gracious Heaven!" The

Wanderer cried, "it cannot" *etc.* 1814-43; so MSS., but Cried the Old Man

440-2 With damp and rain) I found to be a book MS.

In the French tongue, a Novel of Voltaire,  
 His famous Optimist. "Unhappy Man!"  
 Exclaimed my Friend: "here then has been to him 445  
 Retreat within retreat, a sheltering-place  
 Within how deep a shelter! He had fits,  
 Even to the last, of genuine tenderness,  
 And loved the haunts of children; here, no doubt,  
 Pleasing and pleased, he shared their simple sports, 450  
 Or sate companionless; and here the book,  
 Left and forgotten in his careless way,  
 Must by the cottage-children have been found:  
 Heaven bless them, and their inconsiderate work!  
 To what odd purpose have the darlings turned 455  
 This sad memorial of their hapless friend!"

"Me," said I, "most doth it surprise, to find  
 Such book in such a place!"—"A book it is,"  
 He answered, "to the Person suited well,  
 Though little suited to surrounding things: 460  
 'Tis strange, I grant; and stranger still had been  
 To see the Man who owned it, dwelling here,  
 With one poor shepherd, far from all the world!—  
 Now, if our errand hath been thrown away,  
 As from these intimations I forebode, 465  
 Grieved shall I be—less for my sake than yours,  
 And least of all for him who is no more."

450-3 so 1827: He sometimes played with them; and here hath sate  
 Far oftener by himself. This Book, I guess,  
 Hath been forgotten in his careless way;  
 Left here when he was occupied in mind;  
 And by the Cottage Children has been found. 1814-20; so  
 MSS., but l. 453 And so must by the Children have been found  
 456 This monument of their unhappy Friend! MSS. 457 ... said I "the  
 device surprises less, I know not for what reason, than to find MSS.  
 459-62 ... not ill suited to the Man

And I was moved at sight of it; 'tis strange  
 I grant, and yet more strange had been to see  
 The Man, who was its Owner, dwelling here. MSS.

461-2 so 1827: Nor, with the knowledge which my mind possessed,  
 Could I behold it undisturbed: 'tis strange,  
 I grant, and stranger still had been to see etc. as MSS.,

1814-20

464-6 Our errand has, it seems, been thrown away,  
 And I am griev'd, less etc. X

By this, the book was in the old Man's hand ;  
 And he continued, glancing on the leaves  
 An eye of scorn :—"The lover," said he, "doomed 470  
 To love when hope hath failed him—whom no depth  
 Of privacy is deep enough to hide,  
 Hath yet his bracelet or his lock of hair,  
 And that is joy to him. When change of times  
 Hath summoned kings to scaffolds, do but give 475  
 The faithful servant, who must hide his head  
 Henceforth in whatsoever nook he may,  
 A kerchief sprinkled with his master's blood,  
 And he too hath his comforter. How poor,  
 Beyond all poverty how destitute, 480  
 Must that Man have been left, who, hither driven,  
 Flying or seeking, could yet bring with him  
 No dearer relique, and no better stay,  
 Than this dull product of a scoffer's pen,  
 Impure conceits discharging from a heart 485  
 Hardened by impious pride!—I did not fear  
 To tax you with this journey ;"—mildly said  
 My venerable Friend, as forth we stepped  
 Into the presence of the cheerful light—  
 "For I have knowledge that you do not shrink 490  
 From moving spectacles ;—but let us on."

So speaking, on he went, and at the word  
 I followed, till he made a sudden stand :  
 For full in view, approaching through a gate  
 That opened from the enclosure of green fields 495  
 Into the rough uncultivated ground,  
 Behold the Man whom he had fancied dead !  
 I knew from his deportment, mien, and dress,  
 That it could be no other ; a pale face,  
 A meagre person, tall, and in a garb 500

484 dull] vile C      484-6 Than such a Book as this. I did not fear X  
 487-91      . . . journey, as we stepped  
 Forth from that covert into open day  
 Said cheerfully my venerable Friend  
 For I . . . spectacles. Few words may serve  
 To tell his story X (*which now returns to l. 164 app. crit.—He was,*  
     like myself etc.)

498 so 1827: from the appearance and the dress MSS., 1814-20

500 so 1845: A tall and meagre person, in a garb MS., 1814-43

Not rustic—dull and faded like himself!  
 He saw us not, though distant but few steps;  
 For he was busy, dealing, from a store  
 Upon a broad leaf carried, choicest strings  
 Of red ripe currants; gift by which he strove, 505  
 With intermixture of endearing words,  
 To soothe a Child, who walked beside him, weeping  
 As if disconsolate.—“They to the grave  
 Are bearing him, my Little-one,” he said,  
 “To the dark pit; but he will feel no pain; 510  
 His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.”

More might have followed—but my honoured Friend  
 Broke in upon the Speaker with a frank  
 And cordial greeting.—Vivid was the light  
 That flashed and sparkled from the other’s eyes; 515  
 He was all fire: no shadow on his brow  
 Remained, nor sign of sickness on his face.  
 Hands joined he with his Visitant,—a grasp,  
 An eager grasp; and many moments’ space—  
 When the first glow of pleasure was no more, 520  
 And, of the sad appearance which at once  
 Had vanished, much was come and coming back—  
 An amicable smile retained the life  
 Which it had unexpectedly received,  
 Upon his hollow cheek. “How kind,” he said, 525  
 “Nor could your coming have been better timed;  
 For this, you see, is in our narrow world

504–5 so 1827: Which on a leaf he carried in his hand,  
 Strings of ripe currants *etc.* MSS., 1814–20

508–8 To cheer a weeping Child, a ruddy Boy  
 That tottered by his side. MSS.

512–15 so 1827: Glad was my Comrade now, though he at first,  
 I doubt not, had been more surprized than glad.  
 But now, recovered from the shock and calm,  
 He soberly advanced; and to the Man  
 Gave cheerful greeting.—Vivid was the light  
 Which flashed at this from out the Other’s eyes; MSS.,

1814–20

516–17 so 1845: so C, but l. 517 No sign of . . . left upon . . .

He was all fire: the sickness from his face

Passed like a fancy that is swept away; MSS., 1814–43

521–2 so 1840: Long after what was vanished had returned MSS.: And  
 much of what had vanished was returned 1814–37 527 narrow  
 1827: little MS., 1814–20

A day of sorrow. I have here a charge"—  
 And, speaking thus, he patted tenderly  
 The sun-burnt forehead of the weeping child— 530  
 "A little mourner, whom it is my task  
 To comfort;—but how came ye?—if yon track  
 (Which doth at once befriend us and betray)  
 Conducted hither your most welcome feet,  
 Ye could not miss the funeral train—they yet 535  
 Have scarcely disappeared." "This blooming Child,"  
 Said the old Man, "is of an age to weep  
 At any grave or solemn spectacle,  
 Inly distressed or overpowered with awe,  
 He knows not wherefore;—but the boy to-day, 540  
 Perhaps is shedding orphan's tears; you also  
 Must have sustained a loss."—"The hand of Death,"  
 He answered, "has been here; but could not well  
 Have fallen more lightly, if it had not fallen  
 Upon myself."—The other left these words 545  
 Unnoticed, thus continuing.—

"From yon crag  
 Down whose steep sides we dropped into the vale,  
 We heard the hymn they sang—a solemn sound  
 Heard anywhere; but in a place like this  
 'Tis more than human! Many precious rites 550  
 And customs of our rural ancestry  
 Are gone, or stealing from us; this, I hope,  
 Will last for ever. Oft on my way have I  
 Stood still, though but a casual passenger,  
 So much I felt the awfulness of life, 555

532-6 . . . which your road,  
 You cannot well have missed the funeral train  
 They scarcely yet are out of sight." This Child MS.

536-49 . . . we heard,  
 The old man answered, from yon rock above  
 Down whose *etc.* (547)  
 The hymn they sang—a solemn sound, in truth,  
 Whenever heard, *etc.* X

540-1 so 1845: He knows not why;—but he, perchance, this day,  
 Is shedding Orphan's tears; and you yourself MS., 1814-43

550 precious] antient X

553-4 so 1837: . . . Often have I stopped  
 When on my way, I could not chuse but stop, MS.,  
 1814-20, 1832: Often have I stopped 1827

553-6 . . . Who that has a heart

In that one moment when the corse is lifted  
 In silence, with a hush of decency;  
 Then from the threshold moves with song of peace,  
 And confidential yearnings, tow'rd's its home,  
 Its final home on earth. What traveller—who— 560  
 (How far soe'er a stranger) does not own  
 The bond of brotherhood, when he sees them go,  
 A mute procession on the houseless road;  
 Or passing by some single tenement  
 Or clustered dwellings, where again they raise 565  
 The monitory voice? But most of all  
 It touches, it confirms, and elevates,  
 Then, when the body, soon to be consigned  
 Ashes to ashes, dust bequeathed to dust,  
 Is raised from the church-aisle, and forward borne 570  
 Upon the shoulders of the next in love,  
 The nearest in affection or in blood;  
 Yea, by the very mourners who had knelt  
 Beside the coffin, resting on its lid  
 In silent grief their unuplifted heads, 575  
 And heard meanwhile the Psalmist's mournful plaint,  
 And that most awful scripture which declares  
 We shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed!  
 —Have I not seen—ye likewise may have seen—  
 Son, husband, brothers—brothers side by side, 580  
 And son and father also side by side,  
 Rise from that posture:—and in concert move  
 On the green turf following the vested Priest,  
 Four dear supporters of one senseless weight,  
 From which they do not shrink, and under which 585  
 They faint not, but advance towards the open grave  
 Step after step—together, with their firm  
 Unhidden faces: he that suffers most,

And does not feel the awfulness of life,

That moment when the corpse is lifted up X

559 tow'rd's 1845: to MS., 1814-43 560 on earth 1837: in earth  
 MS., 1814-32 560-2 Its final home in God. And when they go X  
 563 houseless] lonely X 563/4 As is, I know, the manner in the  
 hills X

564-5 And pass some single tenement or lot

Of clustered dwellings, taking up again X

573-606 page torn out of X 586 open grave 1837: grave MS.,  
 1814-32

He outwardly, and inwardly perhaps,  
 The most serene, with most undaunted eye!— 590  
 Oh! blest are they who live and die like these,  
 Loved with such love, and with such sorrow mourned!"

"That poor Man taken hence to-day," replied  
 The Solitary, with a faint sarcastic smile  
 Which did not please me, "must be deemed, I fear, 595  
 Of the unblest; for he will surely sink  
 Into his mother earth without such pomp  
 Of grief, depart without occasion given  
 By him for such array of fortitude.  
 Full seventy winters hath he lived, and mark! 600  
 This simple Child will mourn his one short hour,  
 And I shall miss him; scanty tribute! yet,  
 This wanting, he would leave the sight of men,  
 If love were his sole claim upon their care,  
 Like a ripe date which in the desert falls 605  
 Without a hand to gather it."

At this  
 I interposed, though loth to speak, and said,  
 "Can it be thus among so small a band  
 As ye must needs be here? in such a place  
 I would not willingly, methinks, lose sight 610  
 Of a departing cloud."—" 'Twas not for love"—  
 Answered the sick Man with a careless voice—  
 "That I came hither; neither have I found  
 Among associates who have power of speech,  
 Nor in such other converse as is here, 615  
 Temptation so prevailing as to change  
 That mood, or undermine my first resolve."  
 Then, speaking in like careless sort, he said  
 To my benign Companion,—"Pity 'tis  
 That fortune did not guide you to this house 620  
 A few days earlier; then would you have seen  
 What stuff the Dwellers in a solitude,  
 That seems by Nature hollowed out to be

590/1 Nor finally doth care of other hands

Resign the body to the hollow ground MS.

614 associates] my comrades MSS.

622/3 This tempting, smiling [little tempting X] innocent solitude MSS.

622-4 so 1827: . . . this Solitude

(That seems by Nature framed to be the seat  
 And very bosom of pure innocence) MS., 1814-20

The seat and bosom of pure innocence,  
 Are made of; an ungracious matter this! 625  
 Which, for truth's sake, yet in remembrance too  
 Of past discussions with this zealous friend  
 And advocate of humble life, I now  
 Will force upon his notice; undeterred  
 By the example of his own pure course, 630  
 And that respect and deference which a soul  
 May fairly claim, by niggard age enriched  
 In what she most doth value, love of God  
 And his frail creature Man;—but ye shall hear.  
 I talk—and ye are standing in the sun 635  
 Without refreshment!"

Quickly had he spoken,  
 And, with light steps still quicker than his words,  
 Led toward the Cottage. Homely was the spot;  
 And, to my feeling, ere we reached the door,  
 Had almost a forbidding nakedness; 640  
 Less fair, I grant, even painfully less fair,  
 Than it appeared when from the beetling rock  
 We had looked down upon it. All within,  
 As left by the departed company,  
 Was silent; save the solitary clock 645  
 That on mine ear ticked with a mournful sound.—  
 Following our Guide, we clomb the cottage-stairs  
 And reached a small apartment dark and low,  
 Which was no sooner entered than our Host

627–34 Of former conversations with my Friend

I will tell nakedly and undeterred  
 By reverence which is due to his grey hairs  
 And venerable life; but ye shall hear MSS.

633 so 1845: In what it [she 1827 etc.] values most—the love of God 1814–43  
 636–8 so 1837: Saying this he led Towards the Cottage MSS., 1814–32  
 638 tow'rds *corr.* to toward C 642 beetling rock 1827: Valley's brink  
 MSS., 1814–20 644 the 1827: that 1814–20: As by the funeral  
 train it had been left MSS. 645 save 1845: and MSS., 1814–43  
 646 so 1845: Ticked, as I thought, with melancholy sound MSS., 1814–43  
 646/7 The chairs were in disorder, on a board

Was seen the remnants of that humble fare

On which the little Company had fed

Ere to the distant Church they took their way MS.

647 We clomb the cottage-stairs, as we were led X 648 . . . little  
 room, narrow and dark X

Said gaily, "This is my domain, my cell, 650  
 My hermitage, my cabin, what you will—  
 I love it better than a snail his house.  
 But now ye shall be feasted with our best."

So, with more ardour than an unripe girl  
 Left one day mistress of her mother's stores, 655  
 He went about his hospitable task.  
 My eyes were busy, and my thoughts no less,  
 And pleased I looked upon my grey-haired Friend,  
 As if to thank him; he returned that look,  
 Cheered, plainly, and yet serious. What a wreck 660  
 Had we about us! scattered was the floor,  
 And, in like sort, chair, window-seat, and shelf,  
 With books, maps, fossils, withered plants and flowers,  
 And tufts of mountain moss. Mechanic tools  
 Lay intermixed with scraps of paper, some 665  
 Scribbled with verse: a broken angling-rod  
 And shattered telescope, together linked  
 By cobwebs, stood within a dusty nook;  
 And instruments of music, some half-made,  
 Some in disgrace, hung dangling from the walls. 670  
 But speedily the promise was fulfilled;  
 A feast before us, and a courteous Host  
 Inviting us in glee to sit and eat.  
 A napkin, white as foam of that rough brook  
 By which it had been bleached, o'erspread the board; 675

659 . . . he, too, looked and looked MSS. 661 *so* 1845: We had  
 around [about MS] MS., 1814-20: Had we around 1827-43

664-5 *so* 1827: . . . moss; and here and there

Lay intermixed with these, mechanic tools

And scraps of paper,—some I could perceive 1814-20

664-8 Mechanic tools, the shavings and the dust  
 From woods of divers colours, trinket toys,  
 Loose scraps of paper, some as I could see  
 Scribbled with verse, a broken angling-rod  
 For neighbourhood, a cob-webb'd telescope X  
 And tufts of mountain moss. Here and there flowers  
 And feathers dropp'd from hawks' and eagles' wings  
 Lay intermixed with these mechanic tools  
 Loose scraps *etc.* as X MS.

671 But from such entertainment of our eyes  
 And such employment of our thoughts, we soon  
 Were summon'd, for the promise was fulfill'd X

And was itself half-covered with a store  
 Of dainties,—oaten bread, curd, cheese, and cream;  
 And cakes of butter curiously embossed,  
 Butter that had imbibed from meadow-flowers  
 A golden hue, delicate as their own 680  
 Faintly reflected in a lingering stream.  
 Nor lacked, for more delight on that warm day,  
 Our table, small parade of garden fruits,  
 And whortle-berries from the mountain side.  
 The Child, who long ere this had stilled his sobs, 685  
 Was now a help to his late comforter,  
 And moved, a willing Page, as he was bid,  
 Ministering to our need.

In genial mood,  
 While at our pastoral banquet thus we sate  
 Fronting the window of that little cell, 690  
 I could not, ever and anon, forbear  
 To glance an upward look on two huge Peaks,  
 That from some other vale peered into this.

676 store 1845: load MSS., 1814-43 677 curd 1827: curds  
 MS., 1814-20

678-81 so 1832: Butter that had imbibed a golden tinge,  
 A hue like that of yellow meadow flowers  
 Reflected faintly in a silent pool. MS., 1814-20  
 Butter . . . golden tinge  
 From meadow flowers, hue delicate as theirs *etc. as text* 1827

687 Moved, like a MSS.

688-725 While thus we sate

Fronting\* the window ever and anon  
 I glanced an upward look (the sight till now  
 I had not seen) on two huge mountain peaks  
 That from some other vale peep'd into this  
 "Those lusty twins and I," exclaimed our Host  
 "Are good Companions. Many are the sounds  
 Which the wind fashions in his tuneful course  
 Among the rocks and heaths and dashing shores.  
 These Creatures also of the silent sky  
 These also have their harmony, for so,  
 So do I call it, though there be no voice,  
 Clouds, mists, and shadow, light . . . *as text*  
 , . . sick hearts

And idle spirits. Here I sit and watch.  
 Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man  
 Than is the work done here." X *which ends here but v. note*

to 741-62 p. 418

692/3 Right opposite, two giant mountain Peaks MS.

"Those lusty twins," exclaimed our host, "if here  
 It were your lot to dwell, would soon become 695  
 Your prized companions.—Many are the notes  
 Which, in his tuneful course, the wind draws forth  
 From rocks, woods, caverns, heaths, and dashing shores;  
 And well those lofty brethren bear their part  
 In the wild concert—chiefly when the storm 700  
 Rides high; then all the upper air they fill  
 With roaring sound, that ceases not to flow,  
 Like smoke, along the level of the blast,  
 In mighty current; theirs, too, is the song  
 Of stream and headlong flood that seldom fails; 705  
 And, in the grim and breathless hour of noon,  
 Methinks that I have heard them echo back  
 The thunder's greeting. Nor have nature's laws  
 Left them ungifted with a power to yield  
 Music of finer tone; a harmony, 710  
 So do I call it, though it be the hand  
 Of silence, though there be no voice;—the clouds,  
 The mist, the shadows, light of golden suns,  
 Motions of moonlight, all come thither—touch,  
 And have an answer—thither come, and shape 715  
 A language not unwelcome to sick hearts  
 And idle spirits:—there the sun himself,  
 At the calm close of summer's longest day,  
 Rests his substantial orb;—between those heights  
 And on the top of either pinnacle, 720  
 More keenly than elsewhere in night's blue vault,  
 Sparkle the stars, as of their station proud.  
 Thoughts are not busier in the mind of man  
 Than the mute agents stirring there:—alone  
 Here do I sit and watch.—"

A fall of voice, 725

Regretted like the nightingale's last note,

694-5 so 1827: "Those lusty Twins on which your eyes are cast" [you cast  
 your eyes MS.]

Exclaimed our Host, "if here you dwelt would be MS.,  
 1814-20

704 and the song is theirs MS. 708-9 . . . greeting, but they also  
 yield 710 tone 1827: frame MS., 1814-20

725-8 so 1827-50 [*but rhapsody for strain of rapture* 1845]

With brightening face

The Wanderer [Old Man MS.] heard him speaking thus, and said,  
 MS., 1814-20

Had scarcely closed this high-wrought strain of rapture  
 Ere with inviting smile the Wanderer said:  
 "Now for the tale with which you threatened us!"  
 "In truth the threat escaped me unawares: 730  
 Should the tale tire you, let this challenge stand  
 For my excuse. Dissevered from mankind,  
 As to your eyes and thoughts we must have seemed  
 When ye looked down upon us from the crag,  
 Islanders mid a stormy mountain sea, 735  
 We are not so;—perpetually we touch  
 Upon the vulgar ordinances of the world;  
 And he, whom this our cottage hath to-day  
 Relinquished, lived dependent for his bread  
 Upon the laws of public charity. 740  
 The Housewife, tempted by such slender gains  
 As might from that occasion be distilled,  
 Opened, as she before had done for me,  
 Her doors to admit this homeless Pensioner;  
 The portion gave of coarse but wholesome fare 745  
 Which appetite required—a blind dull nook,  
 Such as she had, the *kennel* of his rest!  
 This, in itself not ill, would yet have been  
 Ill borne in earlier life; but his was now  
 The still contentedness of seventy years. 750  
 Calm did he sit under the wide-spread tree  
 Of his old age; and yet less calm and meek,  
 Winningly meek or venerably calm,

731-3 *so* 1827: I had forgotten it, and 'tis no more  
 Than a bare incident of rustic life,  
 But ye shall have it. Outcast and cut off  
 As we seem here, and must have seemed to you MS.  
 And was forgotten. Let this challenge stand  
 For my excuse, if what I shall relate  
 Tire your attention.—Outcast and cut off *etc. as MS.*,  
 1814-20

735 mid 1845: of MS., 1814-43 737 ordinances 1837: ordinance  
 MS., 1814-32 739 lived 1827: was MS., 1814-20 743 Opened]  
 Contriv'd X 744 A place to harbour also this Old man X 745-6  
 The portion . . . required] Food gave him for his meals MS. 750 seventy]  
 eighty X 751 under 1837: beneath MS., 1814-32  
 751-6 And more than that more torpid and more slow  
 He moved about beneath a double cloud  
 The punishment if punishment it were  
 Of spendthrift *etc. as text* X

Than slow and torpid ; paying in this wise  
 A penalty, if penalty it were, 755  
 For spendthrift feats, excesses of his prime.  
 I loved the old Man, for I pitied him!  
 A task it was, I own, to hold discourse  
 With one so slow in gathering up his thoughts,  
 But he was a cheap pleasure to my eyes ; 760  
 Mild, inoffensive, ready in *his* way,  
 And helpful to his utmost power: and there  
 Our housewife knew full well what she possessed!  
 He was her vassal of all labour, tilled  
 Her garden, from the pasture fetched her kine ; 765  
 And, one among the orderly array  
 Of hay-makers, beneath the burning sun  
 Maintained his place ; or heedfully pursued  
 His course, on errands bound, to other vales,  
 Leading sometimes an inexperienced child 770  
 Too young for any profitable task.  
 So moved he like a shadow that performed  
 Substantial service. Mark me now, and learn  
 For what reward!—The moon her monthly round  
 Hath not completed since our dame, the queen 775  
 Of this one cottage and this lonely dale,  
 Into my little sanctuary rushed—  
 Voice to a rueful treble humanised,  
 And features in deplorable dismay.  
 I treat the matter lightly, but, alas! 780  
 It is most serious: persevering rain

755 A lingering penalty, if such it were MS. 762 *so* 1827: And  
 useful to the utmost of his power MS.: 1814–20 *as text but useful*  
 764–9 . . . labour, nursed

Her infants, from the Pasture fetched her Kine,  
 Her plot of garden ground he dived and dressed,  
 And one among the band of Haymakers,  
 Well as he might, beneath the burning sun  
 Did he maintain his place, with steady pains ;  
 Errands he went at need *etc.* MS.

773–5 . . . willingly and well.

So came and went, uninjured and secure  
 From all mishap. Now mark, and I will prove  
 That we have here a growth of human hearts  
 Unsightly as the worst. Our dame *etc.* MS.

776/7 At the approach of evening, three weeks past MS.

781 *so* 1827: from mid-noon the rain MS., 1814–20

Had fallen in torrents ; all the mountain-tops  
 Were hidden, and black vapours coursed their sides ;  
 This had I seen, and saw ; but, till she spake,  
 Was wholly ignorant that my ancient Friend— 785  
 Who at her bidding early and alone,  
 Had clomb aloft to delve the moorland turf  
 For winter fuel—to his noontide meal  
 Returned not, and now, haply, on the heights  
 Lay at the mercy of this raging storm. 790  
 ‘Inhuman!’—said I, ‘was an old Man’s life  
 Not worth the trouble of a thought?—alas!  
 This notice comes too late.’ With joy I saw  
 Her husband enter—from a distant vale.  
 We sallied forth together ; found the tools 795  
 Which the neglected veteran had dropped,  
 But through all quarters looked for him in vain.  
 We shouted—but no answer ! Darkness fell  
 Without remission of the blast or shower,  
 And fears for our own safety drove us home. 800

“I, who weep little, did, I will confess,  
 The moment I was seated here alone,  
 Honour my little cell with some few tears  
 Which anger and resentment could not dry.  
 All night the storm endured : and, soon as help 805

784-94 and from her mouth  
 Now heard, I heard it with distress of mind,  
 That the Old Man alone upon the heights  
 Lay somewhere at the mercy of the storm  
 Alone, and had been so for many hours.  
 ’Twas known to her, her only of the house,  
 For at her bidding early in the day  
 The heights he had ascended to delve turf  
 For winter fuel—to the noontide meal  
 He came not, nor returned though hours passed by,  
 Hour after hour, and still a raging storm.  
 “Inhuman,” said I, “Why not speak ere this ?  
 Alas, ’tis now too late.” Even at the word  
 Her husband entered etc. MS.

787 moorland 1827: mountain 1814-20 789 so 1827: Came not,  
 and now perchance upon 1814-20

795-7 . . . found the Spot

With difficulty found it, where the Old Man  
 Had piled his work, but looked for him in vain MS.

804 and 1827: or MS., 1814-20

Had been collected from the neighbouring vale,  
 With morning we renewed our quest: the wind  
 Was fallen, the rain abated, but the hills  
 Lay shrouded in impenetrable mist;  
 And long and hopelessly we sought in vain: 810  
 Till, chancing on that lofty ridge to pass  
 A heap of ruin—almost without walls  
 And wholly without roof (the bleached remains  
 Of a small chapel, where, in ancient time,  
 The peasants of these lonely valleys used 815  
 To meet for worship on that central height)—  
 We there espied the object of our search,  
 Lying full three parts buried among tufts  
 Of heath-plant, under and above him strewn,  
 To baffle, as he might, the watery storm: 820  
 And there we found him breathing peaceably,  
 Snug as a child that hides itself in sport  
 'Mid a green hay-cock in a sunny field.  
 We spake—he made reply, but would not stir  
 At our entreaty; less from want of power 825  
 Than apprehension and bewildering thoughts.

“So was he lifted gently from the ground,  
 And with their freight homeward the shepherds moved  
 Through the dull mist, I following—when a step,  
 A single step, that freed me from the skirts 830  
 Of the blind vapour, opened to my view  
 Glory beyond all glory ever seen

809 Lay] Were MS. 811 on that 1827: by [on MS.] yon MS.,  
 1814-20

813-17 so 1827: And wholly without roof (in ancient time  
 It was a Chapel, a small Edifice  
 In which the Peasants of these lonely Dells  
 For worship met upon that central height)—  
 Chancing to pass this wreck of stones, we there  
 Espied at last the Object of our search,  
 Couched in a nook, and seemingly alive.  
 It would have moved you, had you seen the guise  
 In which he occupied his chosen bed, MS., 1814-20

818-19 Lay more than three parts buried under load  
 Of heath-plant which he with his hands had pulled  
 And spread for a protection from the touch  
 Of the cold ground, and heaped the covering high MS.

827 So did we lift him MS. 828 so 1837: the Shepherds homeward  
 MS., 1814-32

By waking sense or by the dreaming soul!  
 The appearance, instantaneously disclosed,  
 Was of a mighty city—boldly say 835  
 A wilderness of building, sinking far  
 And self-withdrawn into a boundless depth,  
 Far sinking into splendour—without end!  
 Fabric it seemed of diamond and of gold,  
 With alabaster domes, and silver spires, 840  
 And blazing terrace upon terrace, high  
 Uplifted; here, serene pavilions bright,  
 In avenues disposed; there, towers begirt  
 With battlements that on their restless fronts  
 Bore stars—illumination of all gems! 845  
 By earthly nature had the effect been wrought  
 Upon the dark materials of the storm  
 Now pacified; on them, and on the coves  
 And mountain-steeps and summits, whereunto  
 The vapours had receded, taking there 850  
 Their station under a cerulean sky.  
 Oh, 'twas an unimaginable sight!  
 Clouds, mists, streams, watery rocks and emerald turf,  
 Clouds of all tincture, rocks and sapphire sky,  
 Confused, commingled, mutually inflamed, 855  
 Molten together, and composing thus,  
 Each lost in each, that marvellous array  
 Of temple, palace, citadel, and huge  
 Fantastic pomp of structure without name,  
 In fleecy folds voluminous, enwrapped. 860  
 Right in the midst, where interspace appeared  
 Of open court, an object like a throne  
 Under a shining canopy of state

833 living soul MS.

833/4 Though I am conscious that no power of words  
 Can body forth, no hues of speech can paint  
 That gorgeous spectacle—too bright and fair  
 Even for remembrance; yet the attempt may give  
 Collateral interest to this homely Tale, 1814–20 (*not in MS.*)

834–5 A huge and mighty City—boldly say MS. 837 boundless  
 MS., 1845: wondrous 1814–43 842 here] and MS. 843 not  
 in MS. 844 With] And MS.

863 Under 1837: Beneath 1814–32

863–5 Stood fixed, and shining canopies were seen  
 And implements *etc.* MS,

Stood fixed ; and fixed resemblances were seen  
 To implements of ordinary use, 865  
 But vast in size, in substance glorified ;  
 Such as by Hebrew Prophets were beheld  
 In vision—forms uncouth of mightiest power  
 For admiration and mysterious awe.  
 This little Vale, a dwelling-place of Man, 870  
 Lay low beneath my feet ; 'twas visible—  
 I saw not, but I felt that it was there.  
 That which I *saw* was the revealed abode  
 Of Spirits in beatitude: my heart  
 Swelled in my breast.—'I have been dead,' I cried, 875  
 'And now I live! Oh! wherefore *do* I live?'  
 And with that pang I prayed to be no more!—  
 —But I forget our Charge, as utterly  
 I then forgot him:—there I stood and gazed:  
 The apparition faded not away, 880  
 And I descended.

Having reached the house,  
 I found its rescued inmate safely lodged,  
 And in serene possession of himself,  
 Beside a fire whose genial warmth seemed met  
 By a faint shining from the heart, a gleam 885  
 Of comfort, spread over his pallid face.  
 Great show of joy the housewife made, and truly  
 Was glad to find her conscience set at ease ;  
 And not less glad, for sake of her good name,  
 That the poor Sufferer had escaped with life. 890  
 But, though he seemed at first to have received  
 No harm, and uncomplaining as before  
 Went through his usual tasks, a silent change  
 Soon showed itself: he lingered three short weeks ;  
 And from the cottage hath been borne to-day. 895

"So ends my dolorous tale, and glad I am  
 That it is ended." At these words he turned—  
 And, with blithe air of open fellowship,

870 *so* 1845: Below me was the earth ; this little Vale MS., 1814-43

882 I found the Shepherds' burden MS.

884-6 *so* 1837: Beside a genial fire ; that seemed to spread

A gleam of comfort o'er his pallid face. MS., 1814-32

Brought from the cupboard wine and stouter cheer,  
Like one who would be merry. Seeing this, 900  
My grey-haired Friend said courteously—"Nay, nay,  
You have regaled us as a hermit ought;  
Now let us forth into the sun!"—Our Host  
Rose, though reluctantly, and forth we went.

## BOOK THIRD

### DESPONDENCY

#### ARGUMENT

Images in the Valley.—Another Recess in it entered and described.—Wanderer's sensations.—Solitary's excited by the same objects.—Contrast between these.—Despondency of the Solitary gently reproved.—Conversation exhibiting the Solitary's past and present opinions and feelings, till he enters upon his own History at length.—His domestic felicity.—Afflictions.—Dejection.—Roused by the French Revolution.—Disappointment and disgust.—Voyage to America.—Disappointment and disgust pursue him.—His return.—His languor and depression of mind, from want of faith in the great truths of Religion, and want of confidence in the virtue of Mankind.

A HUMMING BEE—a little tinkling rill—  
 A pair of falcons wheeling on the wing,  
 In clamorous agitation, round the crest  
 Of a tall rock, their airy citadel—  
 By each and all of these the pensive ear 5  
 Was greeted, in the silence that ensued,  
 When through the cottage-threshold we had passed,  
 And, deep within that lonesome valley, stood  
 Once more beneath the concave of a blue  
 And cloudless sky.—Anon exclaimed our Host, 10  
 Triumphantly dispersing with the taunt  
 The shade of discontent which on his brow  
 Had gathered,—“Ye have left my cell,—but see  
 How Nature hems you in with friendly arms!  
 And by her help ye are my prisoners still. 15  
 But which way shall I lead you ?—how contrive,  
 In spot so parsimoniously endowed,  
 That the brief hours, which yet remain, may reap  
 Some recompense of knowledge or delight ?”  
 So saying, round he looked, as if perplexed ; 20  
 And, to remove those doubts, my grey-haired Friend  
 Said—“Shall we take this pathway for our guide ?—  
 Upward it winds, as if, in summer heats,  
 Its line had first been fashioned by the flock  
 Seeking a place of refuge at the root 25

9 a blue 1832: the blue 1814–27      9–10 . . . the concave of the  
 calm, Cerulean sky MS.      25 so 1837: A place of refuge seeking MS.,  
 1814–32

Of yon black Yew-tree, whose protruded boughs  
 Darken the silver bosom of the crag,  
 From which she draws her meagre sustenance.  
 There in commodious shelter may we rest.  
 Or let us trace this streamlet to its source ; 30  
 Feebly it tinkles with an earthy sound,  
 And a few steps may bring us to the spot  
 Where, haply, crowned with flowerets and green herbs,  
 The mountain infant to the sun comes forth,  
 Like human life from darkness."—A quick turn 35  
 Through a strait passage of encumbered ground,  
 Proved that such hope was vain:—for now we stood  
 Shut out from prospect of the open vale,  
 And saw the water, that composed this rill,  
 Descending, disembodied, and diffused 40  
 O'er the smooth surface of an ample crag,  
 Lofty, and steep, and naked as a tower.  
 All further progress here was barred ;—And who,  
 Thought I, if master of a vacant hour,  
 Here would not linger, willingly detained ? 45  
 Whether to such wild objects he were led  
 When copious rains have magnified the stream  
 Into a loud and white-robed waterfall,  
 Or introduced at this more quiet time.

Upon a semicirque of turf-clad ground, 50  
 The hidden nook discovered to our view  
 A mass of rock, resembling, as it lay  
 Right at the foot of that moist precipice,  
 A stranded ship, with keel upturned, that rests  
 Fearless of winds and waves. Three several stones 55  
 Stood near, of smaller size, and not unlike  
 To monumental pillars: and, from these  
 Some little space disjoined, a pair were seen,  
 That with united shoulders bore aloft  
 A fragment, like an altar, flat and smooth: 60

28 she . . . her 1827: it . . . its MS., 1814–20      30 its MS., 1814–27,  
 1845–50: his 1832–43      35 so 1827: At the word We followed  
 where [as MS.] he led:—a sudden turn MS., 1814–20      43 progress]  
 prospect MS.

44 Stranger, or Inmate of the lonesome vale  
 What living Man, thought I within myself MS.

Barren the tablet, yet thereon appeared  
 A tall and shining holly, that had found  
 A hospitable chink, and stood upright,  
 As if inserted by some human hand  
 In mockery, to wither in the sun, 65  
 Or lay its beauty flat before a breeze,  
 The first that entered. But no breeze did now  
 Find entrance;—high or low appeared no trace  
 Of motion, save the water that descended,  
 Diffused adown that barrier of steep rock, 70  
 And softly creeping, like a breath of air,  
 Such as is sometimes seen, and hardly seen,  
 To brush the still breast of a crystal lake.

“Behold a cabinet for sages built,  
 Which kings might envy!”—Praise to this effect 75  
 Broke from the happy old Man’s reverend lip;  
 Who to the Solitary turned, and said,  
 “In sooth, with love’s familiar privilege,  
 You have decried the wealth which is your own.  
 Among these rocks and stones, methinks, I see 80  
 More than the heedless impress that belongs  
 To lonely nature’s casual work: they bear  
 A semblance strange of power intelligent,  
 And of design not wholly worn away.  
 Boldest of plants that ever faced the wind, 85  
 How gracefully that slender shrub looks forth  
 From its fantastic birthplace! And I own,  
 Some shadowy intimations haunt me here,

61/2 Conspicuously stationed, one fair Plant, MS., 1814–20

79 decried the 1827: decried, in no unseemly terms Of modesty, that MS., 1814–20 88/9 I cannot but incline to a belief 1814–20

88–90 Some shadowy notion hangs upon my mind

That in the fashion of the smooth flat stone,  
 The moss from which the careless Holly sprouts,  
 And in the fellowship which thus it holds  
 With its untired supporters, and no less  
 In those three others, upright and unhewn,  
 Each single and yet seemingly allied  
 Yea, in that stranded Hulk, or rather call it  
 A rugged Temple thatched with living heath  
 That punctually renews its splendid flowers  
 From year to year, I cannot but incline

That in these shows a chronicle survives  
 Of purposes akin to those of Man, 90  
 But wrought with mightier arm than now prevails.  
 —Voiceless the stream descends into the gulf  
 With timid lapse;—and lo! while in this strait  
 I stand—the chasm of sky above my head  
 Is heaven's profoundest azure; no domain 95  
 For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,  
 Or to pass through; but rather an abyss  
 In which the everlasting stars abide;  
 And whose soft gloom, and boundless depth, might tempt  
 The curious eye to look for them by day. 100  
 —Hail Contemplation! from the stately towers,  
 Reared by the industrious hand of human art  
 To lift thee high above the misty air  
 And turbulence of murmuring cities vast;  
 From academic groves, that have for thee 105  
 Been planted, hither come and find a lodge  
 To which thou mayst resort for holier peace,—  
 From whose calm centre thou, through height or depth,  
 Mayst penetrate, wherever truth shall lead;  
 Measuring through all degrees, until the scale 110  
 Of time and conscious nature disappear,  
 Lost in unsearchable eternity!"

A pause ensued; and with minuter care  
 We scanned the various features of the scene:  
 And soon the Tenant of that lonely vale 115  
 With courteous voice thus spake—

"I should have grieved  
 Hereafter, not escaping self-reproach,  
 If from my poor retirement ye had gone  
 Leaving this nook unvisited: but, in sooth,  
 Your unexpected presence had so roused 120  
 My spirits, that they were bent on enterprise;  
 And, like an ardent hunter, I forgot,  
 Or, shall I say?—disdained, the game that lurks  
 At my own door. The shapes before our eyes

To a dim faith that in these various shews  
 A chronicle survives, a type or remnant  
 Of purposes etc. MS.

- And their arrangement, doubtless must be deemed 125  
 The sport of Nature, aided by blind Chance  
 Rudely to mock the works of toiling Man.  
 And hence, this upright shaft of unhewn stone,  
 From Fancy, willing to set off her stores  
 By sounding titles, hath acquired the name 130  
 Of Pompey's pillar; that I gravely style  
 My Theban obelisk; and, there, behold  
 A Druid cromlech!—thus I entertain  
 The antiquarian humour, and am pleased  
 To skim along the surfaces of things, 135  
 Beguiling harmlessly the listless hours.  
 But if the spirit be oppressed by sense  
 Of instability, revolt, decay,  
 And change, and emptiness, these freaks of Nature  
 And her blind helper Chance, do *then* suffice 140  
 To quicken, and to aggravate—to feed  
 Pity and scorn, and melancholy pride,  
 Not less than that huge Pile (from some abyss  
 Of mortal power unquestionably sprung)  
 Whose hoary diadem of pendent rocks 145  
 Confines the shrill-voiced whirlwind, round and round  
 Eddying within its vast circumference,  
 On Sarum's naked plain—than pyramid  
 Of Egypt, unsubverted, undissolved—  
 Or Syria's marble ruins towering high 150  
 Above the sandy desert, in the light  
 Of sun or moon.—Forgive me, if I say  
 That an appearance which hath raised your minds  
 To an exalted pitch (the self-same cause  
 Different effect producing) is for me 155  
 Fraught rather with depression than delight,  
 Though shame it were, could I not look around,  
 By the reflection of your pleasure, pleased.  
 Yet happier in my judgment, even than you  
 With your bright transports fairly may be deemed, 160
- 128-30 Imagination fills the secret [heart ?]  
 And hence that upright shaft of unhewn stone  
 Hath won from me the venerable name MS.
- 128-36 *added to MS.*
- 156-7 Rather a place of penance than delight  
 Though at this moment I can look around me MS.
- 157 around 1827: around me 1815-20

The wandering Herbalist,—who, clear alike  
 From vain, and, that worse evil, vexing thoughts,  
 Casts, if he ever chance to enter here,  
 Upon these uncouth Forms a slight regard  
 Of transitory interest, and peeps round 165  
 For some rare floweret of the hills, or plant  
 Of craggy fountain; what he hopes for wins,  
 Or learns, at least, that 'tis not to be won:  
 Then, keen and eager, as a fine-nosed hound  
 By soul-engrossing instinct driven along 170  
 Through wood or open field, the harmless Man  
 Departs, intent upon his onward quest!—  
 Nor is that Fellow-wanderer, so deem I,  
 Less to be envied, (you may trace him oft  
 By scars which his activity has left 175  
 Beside our roads and pathways, though, thank Heaven!  
 This covert nook reports not of his hand)  
 He who with pocket-hammer smites the edge  
 Of luckless rock or prominent stone, disguised  
 In weather-stains or crusted o'er by Nature 180  
 With her first growths, detaching by the stroke  
 A chip or splinter—to resolve his doubts;  
 And, with that ready answer satisfied,  
 The substance classes by some barbarous name,  
 And hurries on; or from the fragments picks 185  
 His specimen, if but haply interveined  
 With sparkling mineral, or should crystal cube  
 Lurk in its cells—and thinks himself enriched,  
 Wealthier, and doubtless wiser, than before!

161 so 1827: Is He (if such have ever entered here)

The wandering Herbalist,—who, *etc.* MS., 1814–20

163–4 so 1827: Casts on these uncouth *etc.* MS., 1814–20

179–81 so 1827: Of the hard rocks by weather stains disguised

Or green and grey with vegetation thin

Nature's first growth *etc.* MS.

Of every luckless rock or stone that stands

Before his sight, by weather-stains disguised,

Or crusted o'er with vegetation thin,

Nature's first growth *etc.* 1814–20

184 so 1827: Doth to the substance give MS., 1814–20

185 so 1827: Then hurries 1814–20: passes MS. 186 so 1845: if haply

1814–43 187 cube 1820: tube MS., 1814 188 so 1820: Be

lodged therein MS., 1814 189–208 not in MS.

Intrusted safely each to his pursuit, 190  
 Earnest alike, let both from hill to hill  
 Range; if it please them, speed from clime to clime;  
 The mind is full—and free from pain their pastime."

"Then," said I, interposing, "One is near,  
 Who cannot but possess in your esteem 195  
 Place worthier still of envy. May I name,  
 Without offence, that fair-faced cottage-boy?  
 Dame Nature's pupil of the lowest form,  
 Youngest apprentice in the school of art!  
 Him, as we entered from the open glen, 200  
 You might have noticed, busily engaged,  
 Heart, soul, and hands,—in mending the defects  
 Left in the fabric of a leaky dam  
 Raised for enabling this penurious stream  
 To turn a slender mill (that new-made plaything) 205  
 For his delight—the happiest he of all!"

"Far happiest," answered the desponding Man,  
 "If, such as now he is, he might remain!  
 Ah! what avails imagination high  
 Or question deep? what profits all that earth, 210  
 Or heaven's blue vault, is suffered to put forth  
 Of impulse or allurement, for the Soul  
 To quit the beaten track of life, and soar  
 Far as she finds a yielding element  
 In past or future; far as she can go 215  
 Through time or space—if neither in the one,  
 Nor in the other region, nor in aught  
 That Fancy, dreaming o'er the map of things,  
 Hath placed beyond these penetrable bounds,  
 Words of assurance can be heard; if nowhere 220  
 A habitation, for consummate good,  
 Or for progressive virtue, by the search  
 Can be attained,—a better sanctuary  
 From doubt and sorrow, than the senseless grave?"

191-2 so 1827: This earnest Pair may range from hill to hill And 1814-20

193 so 1845: —no pain is in their sport 1814-43: their pastime free from  
 pain C 204 Raised 1827: Framed 1814-20

218-19 That may by pure abstraction be conceived

To lie beyond *etc.* MS.

222 Or MS., 1814-20, 1845: Nor 1827-43

"Is this," the grey-haired Wanderer mildly said, 225  
 "The voice, which we so lately overheard,  
 To that same child, addressing tenderly  
 The consolations of a hopeful mind?  
*'His body is at rest, his soul in heaven.'*  
 These were your words; and, verily, methinks 230  
 Wisdom is oftentimes nearer when we stoop  
 Than when we soar."—

The Other, not displeased,  
 Promptly replied—"My notion is the same.  
 And I, without reluctance, could decline  
 All act of inquisition whence we rise, 235  
 And what, when breath hath ceased, we may become.  
 Here are we, in a bright and breathing world.  
 Our origin, what matters it? In lack  
 Of worthier explanation, say at once  
 With the American (a thought which suits 240  
 The place where now we stand) that certain men  
 Leapt out together from a rocky cave;  
 And these were the first parents of mankind:  
 Or, if a different image be recalled  
 By the warm sunshine, and the jocund voice 245  
 Of insects chirping out their careless lives  
 On these soft beds of thyme-besprinkled turf,  
 Choose, with the gay Athenian, a conceit  
 As sound—blithe race! whose mantles were bedecked  
 With golden grasshoppers, in sign that they 250  
 Had sprung, like those bright creatures, from the soil  
 Whereon their endless generations dwelt.  
 But stop! these theoretic fancies jar  
 On serious minds: then, as the Hindoos draw

225 Wanderer 1814: Pedlar MS.

225-35 added to MS.

227 Consoling tenderly the weeping child MS.

234-5 But I could waive the thought of whence we rise MS.

246 Of insects sporting in the summer air

Or chirping out their brief and careless lives MS.

249-52 so 1827: . . . with that blithe race who wore erewhile

Their golden Grasshoppers, in sign that they

Had sprung from out the soil whereon they dwelt. MS.,

1814-20

254 minds; then 1827: minds; for, doubtless, in one sense,

The theme *is* serious; then, MS., 1814-20

Their holy Ganges from a skiey fount, 255  
 Even so deduce the stream of human life  
 From seats of power divine ; and hope, or trust,  
 That our existence winds her stately course  
 Beneath the sun, like Ganges, to make part  
 Of a living ocean ; or, to sink engulfed, 260  
 Like Niger, in impenetrable sands  
 And utter darkness : thought which may be faced,  
 Though comfortless!—

Not of myself I speak ;  
 Such acquiescence neither doth imply,  
 In me, a meekly-bending spirit soothed 265  
 By natural piety ; nor a lofty mind,  
 By philosophic discipline prepared  
 For calm subjection to acknowledged law ;  
 Pleased to have been, contented not to be.  
 Such palms I boast not ;—no ! to me, who find, 270  
 Reviewing my past way, much to condemn,  
 Little to praise, and nothing to regret,  
 (Save some remembrances of dream-like joys  
 That scarcely seem to have belonged to me)  
 If I must take my choice between the pair 275  
 That rule alternately the weary hours,  
 Night is than day more acceptable ; sleep  
 Doth, in my estimate of good, appear  
 A better state than waking ; death than sleep :  
 Feelingly sweet is stillness after storm, 280  
 Though under covert of the wormy ground !

“Yet be it said, in justice to myself,  
 That in more genial times, when I was free  
 To explore the destiny of human kind  
 (Not as an intellectual game pursued 285  
 With curious subtilty, from wish to cheat  
 Irksome sensations ; but by love of truth  
 Urged on, or haply by intense delight  
 In feeding thought, wherever thought could feed)  
 I did not rank with those (too dull or nice, 290

258 her 1827: its MS., 1814–20

260 so 1827: . . . Ocean: or, if such may seem

Its tendency, to be engulfed and lost MS., 1814–20

273–4 added to MS.

286 from wish 1827: thereby MS., 1814–20

For to my judgment such they then appeared,  
 Or too aspiring, thankless at the best)  
 Who, in this frame of human life, perceive  
 An object whereunto their souls are tied  
 In discontented wedlock ; nor did e'er, 295  
 From me, those dark impervious shades, that hang  
 Upon the region whither we are bound,  
 Exclude a power to enjoy the vital beams  
 Of present sunshine.—Deities that float  
 On wings, angelic Spirits! I could muse 300  
 O'er what from eldest time we have been told  
 Of your bright forms and glorious faculties,  
 And with the imagination rest content,  
 Not wishing more ; repining not to tread  
 The little sinuous path of earthly care, 305  
 By flowers embellished, and by springs refreshed.  
 —'Blow winds of autumn!—let your chilling breath  
 Take the live herbage from the mead, and strip  
 The shady forest of its green attire,—  
 And let the bursting clouds to fury rouse 310  
 The gentle brooks!—Your desolating sway,  
 Sheds,' I exclaimed, 'no sadness upon me,  
 And no disorder in your rage I find.  
 What dignity, what beauty, in this change  
 From mild to angry, and from sad to gay, 315  
 Alternate and revolving! How benign,  
 How rich in animation and delight,  
 How bountiful these elements—compared  
 With aught, as more desirable and fair,  
 Devised by fancy for the golden age ; 320  
 Or the perpetual warbling that prevails  
 In Arcady, beneath unaltered skies,  
 Through the long year in constant quiet bound,  
 Night hushed as night, and day serene as day!  
 —But why this tedious record ?—Age, we know, 325

300 Spirits] Virtues MS. 303 rest 1845: be MS., 1814-43  
 305 sinuous] twining MS. 306 Embellished by sweet flowers, by  
 springs C 308 live] green MS. 309 The forest of its beauti-  
 ful attire MS. 312 so 1837: Thus I exclaimed, "no sadness sheds  
 on me MS., 1814-32

325 But, out of matter worthless as myself  
 See with what strenuous idleness I spin  
 Most wearisome reflections—Age we know MS. (second draft)

Is garrulous ; and solitude is apt  
 To anticipate the privilege of Age.  
 From far ye come ; and surely with a hope  
 Of better entertainment :—let us hence !”

Loth to forsake the spot, and still more loth 330  
 To be diverted from our present theme,  
 I said, “My thoughts, agreeing, Sir, with yours,  
 Would push this censure farther ;—for, if smiles  
 Of scornful pity be the just reward  
 Of Poesy thus courteously employed 335  
 In framing models to improve the scheme  
 Of Man’s existence, and recast the world,  
 Why should not grave Philosophy be styled,  
 Herself, a dreamer of a kindred stock,  
 A dreamer yet more spiritless and dull ? 340  
 Yes, shall the fine immunities she boasts  
 Establish sounder titles of esteem  
 For her, who (all too timid and reserved  
 For onset, for resistance too inert,  
 Too weak for suffering, and for hope too tame) 345  
 Placed, among flowery gardens curtained round  
 With world-excluding groves, the brotherhood  
 Of soft Epicureans, taught—if they  
 The ends of being would secure, and win  
 The crown of wisdom—to yield up their souls 350  
 To a voluptuous unconcern, preferring  
 Tranquillity to all things. Or is she,”  
 I cried, “more worthy of regard, the Power,  
 Who, for the sake of sterner quiet, closed  
 The Stoic’s heart against the vain approach 355  
 Of admiration, and all sense of joy ?”

325–34 Or that Elysium fabled to possess  
 Stars and purpureal [? sunshine] of its own  
 A place of recompense ; for ghostly shades  
 Of Heroes, Bards, and Lovers, myrtle crowns.  
 Though pleased to listen I was tempted here  
 To slide into the stream of his discourse  
 With a consenting current ; and I said  
 “If smiles of pity be the just reward MS. (*first draft*)

341 so 1827: “Yes,” said I, “shall the immunities to which  
 She doth lay claim, the precepts she bestows, MS., 1814–20  
 346 Placed, among so 1827: Did place, in MS., 1814–20

His countenance gave notice that my zeal  
 Accorded little with his present mind ;  
 I ceased, and he resumed.—“Ah! gentle Sir,  
 Slight, if you will, the *means* ; but spare to slight 360  
 The *end* of those, who did, by system, rank,  
 As the prime object of a wise man’s aim,  
 Security from shock of accident,  
 Release from fear ; and cherished peaceful days  
 For their own sakes, as mortal life’s chief good, 365  
 And only reasonable felicity.  
 What motive drew, what impulse, I would ask,  
 Through a long course of later ages, drove,  
 The hermit to his cell in forest wide ;  
 Or what detained him, till his closing eyes 370  
 Took their last farewell of the sun and stars,  
 Fast anchored in the desert ?—Not alone  
 Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,  
 Wrongs unredressed, or insults unavenged  
 And unavengeable, defeated pride, 375  
 Prosperity subverted, maddening want,  
 Friendship betrayed, affection unreturned,  
 Love with despair, or grief in agony ;—  
 Not always from intolerable pangs  
 He fled ; but, compassed round by pleasure, sighed 380  
 For independent happiness ; craving peace,  
 The central feeling of all happiness,  
 Not as a refuge from distress or pain,  
 A breathing-time, vacation, or a truce,  
 But for its absolute self ; a life of peace, 385  
 Stability without regret or fear ;  
 That hath been, is, and shall be evermore!—  
 Such the reward he sought ; and wore out life,  
 There, where on few external things his heart  
 Was set, and those his own ; or, if not his, 390  
 Subsisting under nature’s stedfast law.

359 ceased] stopped MS.

365-6 For their own sakes, the bound of just desires  
 As mortal life’s chief good and worthiest hope MS.

367-72 What impulse drove the Hermit to his cell  
 And what detained him there till life was spent  
 Fast anchored *etc.* MS. (*T. of P.—v. notes*)

381 happiness] quiet *T. of P.* 388-9 Therefore on few *T. of P.*

"What other yearning was the master tie  
 Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock  
 Aërial, or in green secluded vale,  
 One after one, collected from afar, 395  
 An undissolving fellowship?—What but this,  
 The universal instinct of repose,  
 The longing for confirmed tranquillity,  
 Inward and outward; humble, yet sublime:  
 The life where hope and memory are as one; 400  
 Where earth is quiet and her face unchanged  
 Save by the simplest toil of human hands  
 Or seasons' difference; the immortal Soul  
 Consistent in self-rule; and heaven revealed  
 To meditation in that quietness!— 405  
 Such was their scheme: and though the wished-for end  
 By multitudes was missed, perhaps attained  
 By none, they for the attempt, and pains employed,  
 Do, in my present censure, stand redeemed  
 From the unqualified disdain, that once 410  
 Would have been cast upon them by my voice  
 Delivering her decisions from the seat  
 Of forward youth—that scruples not to solve  
 Doubts, and determine questions, by the rules  
 Of inexperienced judgment, ever prone 415  
 To overweening faith; and is inflamed,  
 By courage, to demand from real life  
 The test of act and suffering, to provoke  
 Hostility—how dreadful when it comes,  
 Whether affliction be the foe, or guilt! 420

"A child of earth, I rested, in that stage  
 Of my past course to which these thoughts advert,

399 In small and great, in humble and sublime *T. of P.*

401-3 *so* 1845: Earth quiet and unchanged; the human Soul MSS., 1814-43

Where present time is noiseless as the past  
 Or as a thing unborn, the face of earth  
 Save *etc. as text* but human for immortal C

406-8 *so* 1845: . . . thrice happy he who gained

The end proposed! And,—though the same were missed  
 By multitudes, perhaps obtained by none,—

They, for the attempt, and for the pains employed, MS.,  
 1814-43

412 *her* 1832: *its* MS., 1814-27

Upon earth's native energies ; forgetting  
 That mine was a condition which required  
 Nor energy, nor fortitude—a calm 425  
 Without vicissitude ; which, if the like  
 Had been presented to my view elsewhere,  
 I might have even been tempted to despise.  
 But no—for the serene was also bright ;  
 Enlivened happiness with joy o'erflowing, 430  
 With joy, and—oh ! that memory should survive  
 To speak the word—with rapture ! Nature's boon,  
 Life's genuine inspiration, happiness  
 Above what rules can teach, or fancy feign ;  
 Abused, as all possessions *are* abused 435  
 That are not prized according to their worth.  
 And yet, what worth ? what good is given to men,  
 More solid than the gilded clouds of heaven ?  
 What joy more lasting than a vernal flower ?—  
 None ! 'tis the general plaint of human kind 440  
 In solitude : and mutually addressed  
 From each to all, for wisdom's sake :—This truth  
 The priest announces from his holy seat :  
 And, crowned with garlands in the summer grove,  
 The poet fits it to his pensive lyre. 445  
 Yet, ere that final resting-place be gained,  
 Sharp contradictions may arise, by doom  
 Of this same life, compelling us to grieve  
 That the prosperities of love and joy  
 Should be permitted, oft-times, to endure 450  
 So long, and be at once cast down for ever.  
 Oh ! tremble, ye, to whom hath been assigned  
 A course of days composing happy months,  
 And they as happy years ; the present still  
 So like the past, and both so firm a pledge 455  
 Of a congenial future, that the wheels  
 Of pleasure move without the aid of hope :

429 *so* 1837: But that which was serene MS., 1814–32 431 should survive] still survives MS.

440–8 And yet by doom of this same life we grieve

We are compelled to grieve and to repine MS. (440–6 *added to MS.*)

447–8 *so* 1827: Sharp contradictions hourly shall arise

To cross the way ; and we, perchance, by doom

Of this same life, shall be compelled [constrained MS.] to grieve MS., 1814–20

For Mutability is Nature's bane ;  
 And slighted Hope *will* be avenged ; and, when  
 Ye need her favours, ye shall find her not ; 460  
 But in her stead—fear—doubt—and agony !”

This was the bitter language of the heart :  
 But, while he spake, look, gesture, tone of voice,  
 Though discomposed and vehement, were such  
 As skill and graceful nature might suggest 465  
 To a proficient of the tragic scene  
 Standing before the multitude, beset  
 With dark events. Desirous to divert  
 Or stem the current of the speaker's thoughts,  
 We signified a wish to leave that place 470  
 Of stillness and close privacy, a nook  
 That seemed for self-examination made ;  
 Or, for confession, in the sinner's need,  
 Hidden from all men's view. To our attempt  
 He yielded not ; but, pointing to a slope 475  
 Of mossy turf defended from the sun,  
 And on that couch inviting us to rest,  
 Full on that tender-hearted Man he turned  
 A serious eye, and his speech thus renewed.

“You never saw, your eyes did never look 480  
 On the bright form of Her whom once I loved :—  
 Her silver voice was heard upon the earth,  
 A sound unknown to you ; else, honoured Friend !  
 Your heart had borne a pitiable share  
 Of what I suffered, when I wept that loss, 485  
 And suffer now, not seldom, from the thought  
 That I remember, and can weep no more.—

468 so 1837: With sorrowful events ; and we, who heard  
 And saw, were moved. Desirous [Desiring] to divert MS.,  
 1814–20 MS.

472 made 1827: framed MS., 1814–20 474 view] eyes MS.

475–6 slope Of mossy turf] bank Or sloping couch MS.

477–8 By the projecting side of that huge rock  
 Which bore the likeness of a stranded hulk  
 Or uncouth temple built in some dark age  
 For worship, and inviting us to sit

He turned upon that tender-hearted Man MS.

478 Full on 1827: Towards 1814–20 479 so 1837: and thus his  
 speech MS., 1814–32

Stripped as I am of all the golden fruit  
 Of self-esteem ; and by the cutting blasts  
 Of self-reproach familiarly assailed ; 490  
 Yet would I not be of such wintry bareness  
 But that some leaf of your regard should hang  
 Upon my naked branches :—lively thoughts  
 Give birth, full often, to unguarded words ;  
 I grieve that, in your presence, from my tongue 495  
 Too much of frailty hath already dropped ;  
 But that too much demands still more.

You know,

Revered Compatriot—and to you, kind Sir,  
 (Not to be deemed a stranger, as you come  
 Following the guidance of these welcome feet 500  
 To our secluded vale) it may be told—

491 *so* 1837: I would not yet be MS., 1814–32

501 *In place of this one line MS. reads:*

To our secluded Vale) I would discourse  
 Of what I have been, to the end that ye,  
 By evidence from other lips than mine  
 Not to be gained, may judge of what I am,  
 And what our common nature is in me.  
 Yet how without humiliation speak,  
 Though (to the pensive Wanderer this was said)  
 Some points between us lie where we may meet  
 In fellow feeling, dare I hope to gain  
 The requisite indulgence from a Soul  
 So widely parted from me, that hath moved,  
 Above the unequal ground of hope and fear,  
 Along its own peculiar element,  
 With the unimpeded motion of a cloud  
 Upon the bosom of the etherial deep.  
 To that exclusive bower in which we dwell  
 How shall I draw so free a spirit down ?  
 And if that wish succeed, } detain him there  
 And by what skill shall I }  
 Till he hath seen, and knows, and understands,  
 What love, to souls content with narrow room,  
 A secret bounty can bestow, what life  
 Can give, and that familiar spectre, Death,  
 Insatiably recurring to his task,  
 At three tremendous moments take away ?  
 Yet, if extremes degrade a living Soul,  
 Is any calm so perfect as the calm  
 Of the vast ocean, though the same disturbed  
 By sudden visitations of the blast  
 Frets as if very madness were at large

That my demerits did not sue in vain  
 To One on whose mild radiance many gazed  
 With hope, and all with pleasure. This fair Bride—  
 In the devotedness of youthful love, 505  
 Preferring me to parents, and the choir  
 Of gay companions, to the natal roof,  
 And all known places and familiar sights  
 (Resigned with sadness gently weighing down  
 Her trembling expectations, but no more 510  
 Than did to her due honour, and to me  
 Yielded, that day, a confidence sublime  
 In what I had to build upon)—this Bride,  
 Young, modest, meek, and beautiful, I led  
 To a low cottage in a sunny bay, 515  
 Where the salt sea innocuously breaks,  
 And the sea breeze as innocently breathes,  
 On Devon's leafy shores ;—a sheltered hold,  
 In a soft clime encouraging the soil  
 To a luxuriant bounty!—As our steps 520  
 Approach the embowered abode—our chosen seat—  
 See, rooted in the earth, her kindly bed,  
 The unendangered myrtle, decked with flowers,  
 Before the threshold stands to welcome us!  
 While, in the flowering myrtle's neighbourhood, 525

Amid its lowest depths ? Behold in me  
 How time and solitude together make  
 A lawless speaker, all incapable  
 To keep the appointed line. It grieves me now  
 Tho' here we sit in stillness and cool shade  
 That we were tempted forth and left that cell  
 Which, as a lonely shipwrecked Man might say,  
 Doth harbour me and mine. Upon its walls  
 An instrument is hung to which my voice  
 Could sing of pleasures that I dare not speak ;  
 Composure would at least attend the touch  
 Of those soft strings, and then I could relate  
 With progress steady as a flowing stream  
 How those benignant Spirits that direct  
 Unsettled Fancies where to fix, were pleased  
 That my demerits *etc.*

520-1 To a luxuriant bounty. With the Rose  
 The jasmine intertwined her slender arms  
 Around the windows of our Cot, a weight  
 Of Woodbine overcanopied the Porch, MS.

522 her 1827: its MS., 1814-20

Not overlooked but courting no regard,  
 Those native plants, the holly and the yew,  
 Gave modest intimation to the mind  
 How willingly their aid they would unite  
 With the green myrtle, to endear the hours 530  
 Of winter, and protect that pleasant place.  
 —Wild were the walks upon those lonely Downs,  
 Track leading into track; how marked, how worn  
 Into bright verdure, between fern and gorse,  
 Winding away its never-ending line 535  
 On their smooth surface, evidence was none:  
 But, there, lay open to our daily haunt,  
 A range of unappropriated earth,  
 Where youth's ambitious feet might move at large;  
 Whence, unmolested wanderers, we beheld 540  
 The shining giver of the day diffuse  
 His brightness o'er a tract of sea and land  
 Gay as our spirits, free as our desires;  
 As our enjoyments, boundless.—From those heights  
 We dropped, at pleasure, into sylvan combs; 545  
 Where arbours of impenetrable shade,  
 And mossy seats, detained us side by side,  
 With hearts at ease, and knowledge in our hearts  
 'That all the grove and all the day was ours.'

529 so 1827: Of willingness with which MS., 1814–20

531/2 "Ah! why so full, so perfect, so mature,"

Exclaim'd my Anna, "no deficiency left,  
 None where invention might suggest a work  
 For our united hands, presumptuous aim  
 Such beauty to reform;—to take away  
 Is to destroy; and would to thee, dear Spot,  
 Be an ungrateful wrong; unkind it were  
 To undo what has so happily been done,  
 Time, Art, and Nature all consenting here" MS.

534 between] among MS.

535/6 How fashion'd first, and by what means preserved,  
 Whether by tread of man or beast, or touch  
 Of supernatural steps invisible,— MS.

549/50 Then, ere the measure of repose was full  
 Ris'n on the impulse of some sudden thought  
 From the dark bower, if gently sloping turf  
 Allured, or tangled woodland would permit,  
 We took the infant streamlet for our guide.  
 One I remember, an indulgent rill  
 That oft had moistened Anna's rosy lip

“O happy time! still happier was at hand;  
For Nature called my Partner to resign  
Her share in the pure freedom of that life,

550

With its cool waters—this wild wandering Brook  
And others, not less wild, o’er those free tracks  
Conducting us, not seldom were we smit  
By composition, choice of nature’s forms  
Remote or near, presenting to the eye  
Tasks for the shading pencil which some day  
More patient in the tenour of its joys  
Should see accomplished. Mid a fearful store  
Of things for years unlooked at I possess  
A work in that far distant time performed  
By Anna’s hand—the Canvas represents,  
As in a mirror shown, the first Abode  
Of man, a clay-built Cottage thatch’d with Broom,  
The first which he who with the Rill descends,  
Ere far descended, meets upon the bank  
Of its life-feeding waters. As it grew  
The mimic Piece was quicken’d by my praise.  
Flowers also have I, pictured with a touch  
Of skill as fine; the scentless images  
Of past delights existing in their forms  
And not relinquishing their brilliant hues  
Though in their spirit dead. But all was life  
To us, all Nature, breathing love, was filled  
With fragrance universal. Still, perhaps,  
Still may be seen undwindled, undecayed,  
Some bright originals from which she took  
Those faithful copies in the ground surviving  
Whither transplanted with a tender hand  
They from their various birthplaces were brought  
And thröve assembled in our small domain!  
Blest occupation, pastimes innocent.  
Thus, and by other inoffensive ways,  
Thus Love, that through the region of the thoughts  
Can make that purer which was deemed most pure,  
Love that exalts the finest essences  
And brightens brightest hues not only wrought  
In that Enclosure to redress and guard  
And to maintain, but also could find space  
To introduce new touches of his own,  
Heightened the beauties of a finished spot  
Finished and fair as Paradise itself

Where the first Adam dwelt with sinless Eve. MS.

550-2 so 1845: But in due season, Nature interfered  
And called my Partner to resign her share  
In the pure freedom of that wedded life. MS., 1814-20;  
1827-43 as text, but omitting l. 550, and with But for For

Enjoyed by us in common.—To my hope,  
 To my heart's wish, my tender Mate became  
 The thankful captive of maternal bonds; 555  
 And those wild paths were left to me alone.  
 There could I meditate on follies past;  
 And, like a weary voyager escaped  
 From risk and hardship, inwardly retrace  
 A course of vain delights and thoughtless guilt, 560  
 And self-indulgence—without shame pursued.  
 There, undisturbed, could think of and could thank  
 Her whose submissive spirit was to me  
 Rule and restraint—my guardian—shall I say  
 That earthly Providence, whose guiding love 565  
 Within a port of rest had lodged me safe;  
 Safe from temptation, and from danger far?  
 Strains followed of acknowledgment addressed  
 To an Authority enthroned above  
 The reach of sight; from whom, as from their source, 570  
 Proceed all visible ministers of good  
 That walk the earth—Father of heaven and earth,  
 Father, and king, and judge, adored and feared!  
 These acts of mind, and memory, and heart,  
 And spirit—interrupted and relieved 575  
 By observations transient as the glance  
 Of flying sunbeams, or to the outward form  
 Cleaving with power inherent and intense,  
 As the mute insect fixed upon the plant  
 On whose soft leaves it hangs, and from whose cup 580  
 It draws its nourishment imperceptibly—  
 Endeared my wanderings; and the mother's kiss  
 And infant's smile awaited my return.

“In privacy we dwelt, a wedded pair,  
 Companions daily, often all day long; 585  
 Not placed by fortune within easy reach  
 Of various intercourse, nor wishing aught  
 Beyond the allowance of our own fireside,  
 The twain within our happy cottage born,  
 Inmates, and heirs of our united love; 590  
 Graced mutually by difference of sex,  
 And with no wider interval of time

581 so 1845: Draws imperceptibly its nourishment 1814-43

591/2 By the endearing names of nature bound [joined MS.] MS., 1814-43

Between their several births than served for one  
To establish something of a leader's sway ;  
Yet left them joined by sympathy in age ;  
Equals in pleasure, fellows in pursuit.  
On these two pillars rested as in air  
Our solitude.

595

598-9

Our solitude. I speak to minds that know  
The course of Nature. See we not the Nun  
Within a Convent's wiry grate encaged  
A Prisoner, though not wanting choice of grave  
Or gay Companions, to a Captive Bird  
Yield her affections, occupies the time  
In delicate attention to its needs  
Or fond observance of its antic feats ;  
And if her lessons raised to higher pitch  
Its marvellous accomplishments, she smiles  
In triumph, gives caresses and receives,  
Nor finds the day too long when so beguiled.  
The handy Mariner from Indian shores  
Returning homeward, if the Ship convey  
A Leopard's cub or brindled Tyger's whelp  
Drawn from its native forests, can in them  
Find ready solace for his leisure hours,  
And in the busiest casts a glance that way.  
Who more delighted, more sincerely pleased  
Than this ungentle Wanderer of the Deep  
While he admires the gambols, and incites  
To new exertion, nor perchance forbears  
To lull the Favorite in his rugged arms  
Till it hath learnt to love him in return ?  
No otherwise mid Como's chestnut groves  
Or on the pineclad steeps of Appenine  
The Hermit Monk forth issuing from his cell  
Lures down the squirrel from the bough and wins  
From the high rock the unrestricted dove  
To perch upon his shoulders—Ah, if then  
Nature and circumstance, for one effect  
Combining, can to such dependence pledge  
The human feeling in their several hearts,  
Judge of a parent's joy in solitude,  
A mother's tenderness, a father's love,  
How constant, how habitual, how intense !  
The sanguine Chaser of the world's delights  
Knows not to measure such affection—He  
Moves in the shoals, but never tried its depths.  
This universal instinct of mankind  
'Tis Solitude that carries to the extreme  
Of passion and dominion in the Soul  
A strength, a weakness inconceivable.

It soothes me to perceive,  
 Your courtesy withholds not from my words  
 Attentive audience. But, oh! gentle Friends, 600  
 As times of quiet and unbroken peace,  
 Though, for a nation, times of blessedness,  
 Give back faint echoes from the historian's page;  
 So, in the imperfect sounds of this discourse,  
 Depressed I hear, how faithless is the voice 605  
 Which those most blissful days reverberate.  
 What special record can, or need, be given  
 To rules and habits, whereby much was done,  
 But all within the sphere of little things;  
 Of humble, though, to us, important cares, 610  
 And precious interests? Smoothly did our life  
 Advance, swerving not from the path prescribed;  
 Her annual, her diurnal, round alike  
 Maintained with faithful care. And you divine  
 The worst effects that our condition saw 615  
 If you imagine changes slowly wrought,  
 And in their progress unperceivable;  
 Not wished for; sometimes noticed with a sigh,  
 (Whate'er of good or lovely they might bring)  
 Sighs of regret, for the familiar good 620  
 And loveliness endeared which they removed.

"Seven years of occupation undisturbed  
 Established seemingly a right to hold

The state of Kings is lonely, for this cause,  
 For this cause chiefly is the crowned King  
 To a degree unusual among men  
 Bless'd with the sight of children, and holds dear  
 The company their Innocence affords.  
 The Spartan Monarch, once, so Story tells,  
 Surprized while busy with a Playmate's part  
 Mid his young children, blush'd not, well aware  
 That Nature of herself is justified:  
 But oh he loved not, could not love like those  
 Who far from armies and the pomp of Courts  
 Awake to these calm pleasures every day  
 On the plain ground of rural privacies,  
 As I, even I, cherished and loved my own.  
 Your courtesy *etc.* MS.

612 so 1837: not swerving MS., 1814-32      617 progress MS., 1814-  
 45: process 1850 unperceivable 1845: imperceptible MS., 1814-43

- That happiness ; and use and habit gave  
 To what an alien spirit had acquired 625  
 A patrimonial sanctity. And thus,  
 With thoughts and wishes bounded to this world,  
 I lived and breathed ; most grateful—if to enjoy  
 Without repining or desire for more,  
 For different lot, or change to higher sphere, 630  
 (Only except some impulses of pride  
 With no determined object, though upheld  
 By theories with suitable support)—  
 Most grateful, if in such wise to enjoy  
 Be proof of gratitude for what we have ; 635  
 Else, I allow, most thankless.—But, at once,  
 From some dark seat of fatal power was urged  
 A claim that shattered all.—Our blooming girl,  
 Caught in the gripe of death, with such brief time  
 To struggle in as scarcely would allow 640  
 Her cheek to change its colour, was conveyed  
 From us to inaccessible worlds, to regions  
 Where height, or depth, admits not the approach  
 Of living man, though longing to pursue.  
 —With even as brief a warning—and how soon, 645
- 638 A claim that shattered all—the Spoiler fell  
 Upon our peace, and robb'd us unforewarned (*but v. notes*)  
 Have you espied *etc.* as “*Maternal Grief*” (*Vol. II, pp. 51–2, ll. 27–38,*  
*with lines in app. crit.:*  
 Ah, but a Mother saw it, it was seen  
 And by a Father felt. Our blooming girl MS.
- 642 *so* 1845: From us, to regions inaccessible MS., 1814–43  
 645–9 So was the myrtle-shaded Cottage turned  
 Into a House of mourning, from whose doors  
 All grace and favour were at once withdrawn.  
 No light of gladness shone around the Hearth,  
 No music rang within the walls, but there  
 Silence prevailed and undeparting gloom,  
 Suspense of breath and respiration deep,  
 Prayers yielding short relief or haply none,  
 Wringing of hands, and in the Mother's breast  
 Conflicts of agonizing thoughts like these:  
 [*Here follows “Maternal Grief”, ll. 1–26, as in app. crit.*]  
 When we were summoned to deplore her loss  
 That point she had attained, that single point  
 At which those powers are given and only those  
 And only in such measure and degree  
 That one so furnished may depart from earth



Had been erewhile unsettled and disturbed,  
 This second visitation had no power 655  
 To shake; but only to bind up and seal;  
 And to establish thankfulness of heart  
 In Heaven's determinations, ever just.  
 The eminence whereon her spirit stood,  
 Mine was unable to attain. Immense 660  
 The space that severed us! But, as the sight  
 Communicates with heaven's ethereal orbs  
 Incalculably distant; so, I felt  
 That consolation may descend from far  
 (And that is intercourse, and union, too,) 665  
 While, overcome with speechless gratitude,  
 And, with a holier love inspired, I looked  
 On her—at once superior to my woes  
 And partner of my loss.—O heavy change!  
 Dimness o'er this clear luminary crept 670  
 Insensibly;—the immortal and divine  
 Yielded to mortal reflux; her pure glory,  
 As from the pinnacle of worldly state  
 Wretched ambition drops astounded, fell  
 Into a gulf obscure of silent grief, 675  
 And keen heart-anguish—of itself ashamed,  
 Yet obstinately cherishing itself:  
 And, so consumed, she melted from my arms;  
 And left me, on this earth, disconsolate!

657–60      And to inspire meek patience and delight  
               In heaven's determination ever just,  
               And even when most severe, most merciful,  
               If so interpreted. Behold, said I,  
               Not finding strength within me to attain  
               The elevation where she stood alone  
               (But not too senseless to admire), behold  
               An untranslated Spirit all at once  
               Cleansed and made perfect; see in human Form  
               Ideal Truth embodied and enshrined,  
               The weeds of misery put off, and faith  
               Once more by miracle disclosed. O Thou  
               Ordained at once the Partner of my woes  
               And comforter, eye hast Thou given to hope  
               Benighted suddenly, and filled with joy  
               The House of mourning. [Nay, ?] Immense MS.

666–7 . . . with gratitude and filled

With encrease pure of holiest love MS.

670 this clear] that bright MS.

"What followed cannot be reviewed in thought ; 680  
 Much less, retraced in words. If she, of life  
 Blameless, so intimate with love and joy  
 And all the tender motions of the soul,  
 Had been supplanted, could I hope to stand—  
 Infirm, dependent, and now destitute ? 685  
 I called on dreams and visions, to disclose  
 That which is veiled from waking thought ; conjured  
 Eternity, as men constrain a ghost  
 To appear and answer ; to the grave I spake  
 Imploringly ;—looked up, and asked the Heavens 690  
 If Angels traversed their cerulean floors,  
 If fixed or wandering star could tidings yield  
 Of the departed spirit—what abode  
 It occupies—what consciousness retains  
 Of former loves and interests. Then my soul 695  
 Turned inward,—to examine of what stuff  
 Time's fetters are composed ; and life was put  
 To inquisition, long and profitless !  
 By pain of heart—now checked—and now impelled—  
 The intellectual power, through words and things, 700  
 Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way !  
 And from those transports, and these toils abstruse,  
 Some trace am I enabled to retain  
 Of time, else lost ;—existing unto me  
 Only by records in myself not found. 705

"From that abstraction I was roused,—and how ?  
 Even as a thoughtful shepherd by a flash  
 Of lightning startled in a gloomy cave  
 Of these wild hills. For, lo ! the dread Bastille,  
 With all the chambers in its horrid towers, 710  
 Fell to the ground :—by violence overthrown  
 Of indignation ; and with shouts that drowned

692 If they in truth could any tidings yield MS.

706–33 MS. has these lines in the following order : 706–9, 718–31, followed by

Be rich, by mutual and reflected wealth.  
 To mortal men displayed—the Horrid Towers  
 Where wretched Mortals, seldom seen or heard  
 From age to age had been deposited  
 As in a treasure-house—by prime command  
 And for the secret joy of sovereign Power—  
 Fell to the ground *etc.* as 711–16 (sway.)

The crash it made in falling! From the wreck  
 A golden palace rose, or seemed to rise,  
 The appointed seat of equitable law 715  
 And mild paternal sway. The potent shock  
 I felt: the transformation I perceived,  
 As marvellously seized as in that moment  
 When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld  
 Glory—beyond all glory ever seen, 720  
 Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,  
 Dazzling the soul. Meanwhile, prophetic harps  
 In every grove were ringing, 'War shall cease;  
 Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured?  
 Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers, to deck 725  
 The tree of Liberty.'—My heart rebounded;  
 My melancholy voice the chorus joined;  
 —'Be joyful all ye nations; in all lands,  
 Ye that are capable of joy be glad!  
 Henceforth, whate'er is wanting to yourselves 730  
 In others ye shall promptly find;—and all,  
 Enriched by mutual and reflected wealth,  
 Shall with one heart honour their common kind.'

"Thus was I reconverted to the world;  
 Society became my glittering bride, 735  
 And airy hopes my children.—From the depths  
 Of natural passion, seemingly escaped,  
 My soul diffused herself in wide embrace  
 Of institutions, and the forms of things;  
 As they exist, in mutable array, 740  
 Upon life's surface. What, though in my veins  
 There flowed no Gallic blood, nor had I breathed  
 The air of France, not less than Gallic zeal  
 Kindled and burned among the sapless twigs  
 Of my exhausted heart. If busy men 745  
 In sober conclave met, to weave a web

718–19 As marvellously rous'd as, when involved  
 In blinding mist upon the mountain tops  
 As hath erewhile been told I reached the skirts  
 Of the deep vapour and beheld at once MS.

722 Meanwhile] For lo! 732–3 *so* 1832: Be rich by mutual and  
 reflected wealth. 1814–27 737 natural passion] personal feeling  
*alternative in MS.* 738 herself 1827: itself MS., 1814–20  
 744 burned C: burnt 1814–50

Of amity, whose living threads should stretch  
 Beyond the seas, and to the farthest pole,  
 There did I sit, assisting. If, with noise  
 And acclamation, crowds in open air 750  
 Expressed the tumult of their minds, my voice  
 There mingled, heard or not. The powers of song  
 I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves,  
 Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay  
 Of thanks and expectation, in accord 755  
 With their belief, I sang Saturnian rule  
 Returned,—a progeny of golden years  
 Permitted to descend, and bless mankind.  
 —With promises the Hebrew Scriptures teem:  
 I felt their invitation; and resumed 760  
 A long-suspended office in the House  
 Of public worship, where, the glowing phrase  
 Of ancient inspiration serving me,  
 I promised also,—with undaunted trust  
 Foretold, and added prayer to prophecy; 765  
 The admiration winning of the crowd;  
 The help desiring of the pure devout.

“Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed!  
 But History, time’s slavish scribe, will tell  
 How rapidly the zealots of the cause 770  
 Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appeared;  
 Some, tired of honest service; these, outdone,  
 Disgusted therefore, or appalled, by aims  
 Of fiercer zealots—so confusion reigned,  
 And the more faithful were compelled to exclaim, 775  
 As Brutus did to Virtue, ‘Liberty,  
 I worshipped thee, and find thee but a Shade!’

“Such recantation had for me no charm,  
 Nor would I bend to it; who should have grieved  
 At aught, however fair, that bore the mien 780  
 Of a conclusion, or catastrophe.  
 Why then conceal, that, when the simply good  
 In timid selfishness withdrew, I sought

754 tuned] framed MS.      757 golden] happier MS.      760 their]  
 so 1845: the MS., 1814-43: that C      776 did] spake MS.      782  
 simply 1827: simple MS., 1814-20

Other support, not scrupulous whence it came ;  
 And, by what compromise it stood, not nice ? 785  
 Enough if notions seemed to be high-pitched,  
 And qualities determined.—Among men  
 So charactered did I maintain a strife  
 Hopeless, and still more hopeless every hour ;  
 But, in the process, I began to feel 790  
 That, if the emancipation of the world  
 Were missed, I should at least secure my own,  
 And be in part compensated. For rights,  
 Widely—inveterately usurped upon,  
 I spake with vehemence ; and promptly seized 795  
 All that Abstraction furnished for my needs  
 Or purposes ; nor scrupled to proclaim,  
 And propagate, by liberty of life,  
 Those new persuasions. Not that I rejoiced,  
 Or even found pleasure, in such vagrant course, 800  
 For its own sake ; but farthest from the walk  
 Which I had trod in happiness and peace,  
 Was most inviting to a troubled mind ;  
 That, in a struggling and distempered world,  
 Saw a seductive image of herself. 805  
 Yet, mark the contradictions of which Man  
 Is still the sport ! Here Nature was my guide,  
 The Nature of the dissolute ; but thee,  
 O fostering Nature ! I rejected—smiled  
 At others' tears in pity ; and in scorn 810  
 At those, which thy soft influence sometimes drew  
 From my unguarded heart.—The tranquil shores  
 Of Britain circumscribed me ; else, perhaps  
 I might have been entangled among deeds,  
 Which, now, as infamous, I should abhor— 815  
 Despise, as senseless : for my spirit relished

787-8 so 1827: Ruling such, And with such herding, I maintained a strife  
 [began to feel MS.] MS., 1814-20

793-6 . . . Of rights

Usurped upon I argued and adopted  
 Among the floating tenets of the day  
 Whate'er Abstraction etc. MS.

796 All that 1837: Whate'er MS., 1814-32

805 so 1827: Beheld

a cherished image of itself. MS., 1814-20

811 At those which

treacherous Nature sometimes drew MS.

816-17 so 1827: . . . I strangely relished

The exasperated Spirit of that Land MS., 1814-20

Strangely the exasperation of that Land,  
Which turned an angry beak against the down  
Of her own breast; confounded into hope  
Of disencumbering thus her fretful wings. 820

“But all was quieted by iron bonds  
Of military sway. The shifting aims,  
The moral interests, the creative might,  
The varied functions and high attributes  
Of civil action, yielded to a power 825  
Formal, and odious, and contemptible.  
—In Britain, ruled a panic dread of change;  
The weak were praised, rewarded, and advanced;  
And, from the impulse of a just disdain,  
Once more did I retire into myself. 830  
There feeling no contentment, I resolved  
To fly, for safeguard, to some foreign shore,  
Remote from Europe; from her blasted hopes;  
Her fields of carnage, and polluted air.

“Fresh blew the wind, when o’er the Atlantic Main 835  
The ship went gliding with her thoughtless crew;  
And who among them but an Exile, freed  
From discontent, indifferent, pleased to sit  
Among the busily-employed, not more  
With obligation charged, with service taxed, 840  
Than the loose pendant—to the idle wind  
Upon the tall mast streaming. But, ye Powers  
Of soul and sense mysteriously allied,  
O, never let the Wretched, if a choice  
Be left him, trust the freight of his distress 845  
To a long voyage on the silent deep!  
For, like a plague, will memory break out;  
And, in the blank and solitude of things,  
Upon his spirit, with a fever’s strength,  
Will conscience prey.—Feebly must they have felt 850  
Who, in old time, attired with snakes and whips  
The vengeful Furies. *Beautiful* regards  
Were turned on me—the face of her I loved;

819–20 so 1827: Of its own breast; as if it hoped, thereby,  
To disencumber its impatient wings. MS., 1814–20  
840 taxed] tasked MS. 846 on] o’er MS,

The Wife and Mother pitifully fixing  
 Tender reproaches, insupportable! 855  
 Where now that boasted liberty? No welcome  
 From unknown objects I received; and those,  
 Known and familiar, which the vaulted sky  
 Did, in the placid clearness of the night,  
 Disclose, had accusations to prefer 860  
 Against my peace. Within the cabin stood  
 That volume—as a compass for the soul—  
 Revered among the nations. I implored  
 Its guidance; but the infallible support  
 Of faith was wanting. Tell me, why refused 865  
 To One by storms annoyed and adverse winds;  
 Perplexed with currents; of his weakness sick;  
 Of vain endeavours tired; and by his own,  
 And by his nature's, ignorance, dismayed!

“Long wished-for sight, the Western World appeared; 870  
 And, when the ship was moored, I leaped ashore  
 Indignantly—resolved to be a man,  
 Who, having o'er the past no power, would live  
 No longer in subjection to the past,  
 With abject mind—from a tyrannic lord 875  
 Inviting penance, fruitlessly endured:  
 So, like a fugitive, whose feet have cleared  
 Some boundary, which his followers may not cross  
 In prosecution of their deadly chase,  
 Respiring I looked round.—How bright the sun, 880  
 The breeze how soft! Can any thing produced  
 In the old World compare, thought I, for power  
 And majesty with this gigantic stream,  
 Sprung from the desert? And behold a city  
 Fresh, youthful, and aspiring! What are these 885  
 To me, or I to them? As much, at least  
 As he desires that they should be, whom winds  
 And waves have wafted to this distant shore,  
 In the condition of a damaged seed,  
 Whose fibres cannot, if they would, take root. 890  
 Here may I roam at large;—my business is,

Roaming at large, to observe, and not to feel  
 And, therefore, not to act—convinced that all  
 Which bears the name of action, howsoe'er  
 Beginning, ends in servitude—still painful, 895  
 And mostly profitless. And, sooth to say,  
 On nearer view, a motley spectacle  
 Appeared, of high pretensions—unreproved  
 But by the obstreperous voice of higher still;  
 Big passions strutting on a petty stage; 900  
 Which a detached spectator may regard  
 Not unamused.—But ridicule demands  
 Quick change of objects; and, to laugh alone,  
 At a composing distance from the haunts  
 Of strife and folly, though it be a treat 905  
 As choice as musing Leisure can bestow;  
 Yet, in the very centre of the crowd,  
 To keep the secret of a poignant scorn,  
 Howe'er to airy Demons suitable,  
 Of all unsocial courses, is least fit 910  
 For the gross spirit of mankind,—the one  
 That soonest fails to please, and quickliest turns  
 Into vexation.

Let us, then, I said,  
 Leave this unknit Republic to the scourge  
 Of her own passions; and to regions haste, 915  
 Whose shades have never felt the encroaching axe,  
 Or soil endured a transfer in the mart  
 Of dire rapacity. There, Man abides,  
 Primeval Nature's child. A creature weak  
 In combination, (wherefore else driven back 920  
 So far, and of his old inheritance  
 So easily deprived?) but, for that cause,  
 More dignified, and stronger in himself;  
 Whether to act, judge, suffer, or enjoy.  
 True, the intelligence of social art 925  
 Hath overpowered his forefathers, and soon  
 Will sweep the remnant of his line away;

892 To observe whate'er I may MS. 903/4 In woods and wilds, or  
 any lonely place MS., 1814-20

909-10 so 1827: May suit an airy Demon; but, of all

Unsocial courses, 'tis the one least fit MS., 1814-20

914 this . . . Republic] these . . . Republics MS. 915 her 1827:  
 their MS.: its 1814-20 918 dire] their MS.

But contemplations, worthier, nobler far  
 Than her destructive energies, attend  
 His independence, when along the side 930  
 Of Mississippi, or that northern stream  
 That spreads into successive seas, he walks;  
 Pleased to perceive his own unshackled life,  
 And his innate capacities of soul,  
 There imaged: or when, having gained the top 935  
 Of some commanding eminence, which yet  
 Intruder ne'er beheld, he thence surveys  
 Regions of wood and wide savannah, vast  
 Expanse of unappropriated earth,  
 With mind that sheds a light on what he sees; 940  
 Free as the sun, and lonely as the sun,  
 Pouring above his head its radiance down  
 Upon a living and rejoicing world!

"So, westward, tow'rd the unviolated woods  
 I bent my way; and, roaming far and wide, 945  
 Failed not to greet the merry Mocking-bird;  
 And, while the melancholy Muccawiss  
 (The sportive bird's companion in the grove)  
 Repeated o'er and o'er his plaintive cry,  
 I sympathised at leisure with the sound; 950  
 But that pure archetype of human greatness,  
 I found him not. There, in his stead, appeared  
 A creature, squalid, vengeful, and impure;  
 Remorseless, and submissive to no law  
 But superstitious fear, and abject sloth. 955

"Enough is told! Here am I—ye have heard  
 What evidence I seek, and vainly seek;

928-30 But can the oppressor show an inward soul  
 That shall with his compare. How bright, how clear,  
 How lofty, how serene when by the side MS.

933 And not obscurely feels his power of mind MS. 934 innate]  
 sublime MS.

945-50 I bent my way, and verily was cheered  
 By the blithe mocking-bird, and heard [? the cry]  
 { The melancholy cry of Whip-poor-will,  
 { The plaintive cry repeated Whip-poor-will MS.

956-69 What need of more? Here am I, and the course  
 Which my life holds this parallel will shew;  
 Say how you stood *etc.* MS.

What from my fellow-beings I require,  
 And either they have not to give, or I  
 Lack virtue to receive; what I myself, 960  
 Too oft by wilful forfeiture, have lost  
 Nor can regain. How languidly I look  
 Upon this visible fabric of the world,  
 May be divined—perhaps it hath been said:—  
 But spare your pity, if there be in me 965  
 Aught that deserves respect: for I exist,  
 Within myself, not comfortless.—The tenour  
 Which my life holds, he readily may conceive  
 Whoe'er hath stood to watch a mountain brook  
 In some still passage of its course, and seen, 970  
 Within the depths of its capacious breast,  
 Inverted trees, rocks, clouds, and azure sky;  
 And, on its glassy surface, specks of foam,  
 And conglobated bubbles undissolved,  
 Numerous as stars; that, by their onward lapse, 975  
 Betray to sight the motion of the stream,  
 Else imperceptible. Meanwhile, is heard  
 A softened roar, or murmur; and the sound  
 Though soothing, and the little floating isles  
 Though beautiful, are both by Nature charged 980  
 With the same pensive office; and make known  
 Through what perplexing labyrinths, abrupt  
 Precipitations, and untoward straits,  
 The earth-born wanderer hath passed; and quickly,  
 That respite o'er, like traverses and toils 985  
 Must he again encounter.—Such a stream  
 Is human Life; and so the Spirit fares  
 In the best quiet to her course allowed;  
 And such is mine,—save only for a hope  
 That my particular current soon will reach 990  
 The unfathomable gulf, where all is still!"

959–61 *so* 1845: And cannot find; what I myself have lost 1814–43  
 971 capacious] unruffled MS. 972 rocks, clouds, 1837: and rocks,  
 MS., 1814–32 973 . . . its surface, specks of silver foam MS.  
 974/5 A company of little floating Isles MS. 978 *so* 1837: Per-  
 chance, a roar or murmur MS., 1814–20; A softened roar, a murmur  
 1827–32 979 little floating isles] specks of silver foam MS. 986  
*so* 1845: Must be again encountered— MS., 1814–43

## BOOK FOURTH

### DESPONDENCY CORRECTED

#### ARGUMENT

State of feeling produced by the foregoing Narrative.—A belief in a superintending Providence the only adequate support under affliction.—Wanderer's ejaculation.<sup>1</sup>—Acknowledges the difficulty of a lively faith.—Hence immoderate sorrow.<sup>2</sup>—Exhortations.—How received.—Wanderer applies<sup>3</sup> his discourse to that other cause of dejection in the Solitary's mind.—Disappointment<sup>4</sup> from the French Revolution.—States<sup>5</sup> grounds of hope, and insists on the necessity of patience and fortitude with respect to the course of great revolutions.<sup>6</sup>—Knowledge the source of tranquillity.—Rural Solitude favourable to<sup>7</sup> knowledge of the inferior Creatures; Study of their habits and ways recommended;<sup>8</sup> exhortation to bodily exertion and communion<sup>9</sup> with Nature.—Morbid Solitude pitiable.<sup>10</sup>—Superstition better than apathy.—Apathy and destitution unknown in the infancy of society.—The various modes of Religion prevented it.—Illustrated in the Jewish, Persian, Babylonian, Chaldean, and Grecian modes of belief.—Solitary interposes.—Wanderer<sup>11</sup> points out the influence of religious and imaginative feeling<sup>12</sup> in the humble ranks of society, illustrated from present and past times.—These principles<sup>13</sup> tend to recal exploded superstitions and Popery.—Wanderer rebuts this charge, and contrasts the dignities of the Imagination with the presumptuous littleness of certain modern Philosophers.—Recommends<sup>14</sup> other lights and guides.—Asserts the power of the Soul to regenerate herself; Solitary asks<sup>15</sup> how.—Reply.—Personal appeal.<sup>16</sup>—Exhortation to activity of body renewed.—How to commune

<sup>1</sup> so 1837: ejaculation to the supreme Being—Account of his own devotional feelings in youth involved in it—Implores that he may retain in age the power to find repose among enduring and eternal things—What these are 1814–20; 1827–32 . . . involved as 1814, but omitting to . . . Being, and after involved as 1837      <sup>2</sup> so 1837: sorrow—but doubt or despondence not therefore to be inferred—And proceeds to administer consolation to the Solitary 1814–32, but 1827–32 omit but and And . . . administer      <sup>3</sup> so 1827: resumes—and applies 1814–20      <sup>4</sup> so 1827: the disappointment of his expectations from 1814–20      <sup>5</sup> so 1827: states the rational grounds 1814–20      <sup>6</sup> so 1827: of the great revolutions of the world 1814–20      <sup>7</sup> so 1827: Rural life and solitude particularly favourable to a 1814–20      <sup>8</sup> so 1827: recommended for its influence on the affections and the imagination 1814–20      <sup>9</sup> so 1827: an active Communion 1814–20      <sup>10</sup> so 1827: a pitiable thing—If the elevated imagination cannot be exerted—try the humbler fancy 1814–20      <sup>11</sup> so 1827: Wanderer in answer 1814–20      <sup>12</sup> so 1827: on the mind in the humble ranks of Society, in rural life especially—This illustrated 1814–20      <sup>13</sup> so 1827: Observation that these principles 1814–20      <sup>14</sup> so 1827: Philosophers, whom the Solitary appears to esteem—Recommends to him 1814–20      <sup>15</sup> so 1827: agitated, and asks how 1814–20      <sup>16</sup> so 1837: Happy for us that the imagination and affections in our own despite

with Nature.<sup>17</sup>—Wanderer concludes with a legitimate union of the imagination,<sup>18</sup> affections,<sup>18</sup> understanding, and<sup>18</sup> reason.—Effect of his discourse.—Evening; Return to the Cottage.

HERE closed the Tenant of that lonely vale  
 His mournful narrative—commenced in pain,  
 In pain commenced, and ended without peace:  
 Yet tempered, not unfrequently, with strains  
 Of native feeling, grateful to our minds; 5  
 And yielding surely some relief to his,  
 While we sate listening with compassion due.  
 A pause of silence followed; then, with voice  
 That did not falter though the heart was moved,  
 The Wanderer said:—  
 “One adequate support 10  
 For the calamities of mortal life  
 Exists—one only; an assured belief  
 That the procession of our fate, howe’er  
 Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being  
 Of infinite benevolence and power; 15  
 Whose everlasting purposes embrace  
 All accidents, converting them to good.  
 —The darts of anguish *fix* not where the seat  
 Of suffering hath been thoroughly fortified  
 By acquiescence in the Will supreme 20  
 For time and for eternity; by faith,  
 Faith absolute in God, including hope,  
 And the defence that lies in boundless love  
 Of his perfections; with habitual dread  
 Of aught unworthily conceived, endured 25  
 Impatiently, ill-done, or left undone,  
 To the dishonour of his holy name.  
 Soul of our Souls, and safeguard of the world!  
 Sustain, thou only canst, the sick of heart;  
 Restore their languid spirits, and recal 30  
 Their lost affections unto thee and thine!”

mitigate the evils of that state of intellectual Slavery which the calculating understanding is so apt to produce— 1814–20; 1827–32 *omit* in our own despite, state of, and so <sup>17</sup> so 1827: How Nature is to be communed with.—Wanderer concludes with a prospect of a 1814–20 <sup>18</sup> so 1827: 1814–20 *add* the

6 yielding surely 1845: doubtless yielding 1814–43 8–9 so 1845: Such pity yet surviving, with firm voice *etc.* as 1845, 1814–32; 1837–43 clear for firm, and l. 9 That falter’d not, albeit *etc.*

Then, as we issued from that covert nook,  
 He thus continued, lifting up his eyes  
 To heaven:—"How beautiful this dome of sky;  
 And the vast hills, in fluctuation fixed 35  
 At thy command, how awful! Shall the Soul,  
 Human and rational, report of thee  
 Even less than these!—Be mute who will, who can,  
 Yet I will praise thee with impassioned voice:  
 My lips, that may forget thee in the crowd, 40  
 Cannot forget thee here; where thou hast built,  
 For thy own glory, in the wilderness!  
 Me didst thou constitute a priest of thine,  
 In such a temple as we now behold  
 Reared for thy presence: therefore, am I bound 45  
 To worship, here, and everywhere—as one  
 Not doomed to ignorance, though forced to tread,  
 From childhood up, the ways of poverty;  
 From unreflecting ignorance preserved,  
 And from debasement rescued.—By thy grace 50  
 The particle divine remained unquenched;  
 And, 'mid the wild weeds of a rugged soil,  
 Thy bounty caused to flourish deathless flowers,  
 From paradise transplanted: wintry age  
 Impends; the frost will gather round my heart; 55  
 If the flowers wither, I am worse than dead!  
 —Come, labour, when the worn-out frame requires  
 Perpetual sabbath; come, disease and want;  
 And sad exclusion through decay of sense;  
 But leave me unabated trust in thee— 60  
 And let thy favour, to the end of life,  
 Inspire me with ability to seek  
 Repose and hope among eternal things—  
 Father of heaven and earth! and I am rich,  
 And will possess my portion in content! 65

And what are things eternal?—powers depart,"  
 The grey-haired Wanderer stedfastly replied,  
 Answering the question which himself had asked,  
 "Possessions vanish, and opinions change,  
 And passions hold a fluctuating seat: 70  
 But, by the storms of circumstance unshaken,

And subject neither to eclipse nor wane,  
 Duty exists ;—immutably survive,  
 For our support, the measures and the forms,  
 Which an abstract intelligence supplies ; 75  
 Whose kingdom is, where time and space are not.  
 Of other converse which mind, soul, and heart,  
 Do, with united urgency, require,  
 What more that may not perish ?—Thou, dread source,  
 Prime, self-existing cause and end of all 80  
 That in the scale of being fill their place ;  
 Above our human region, or below,  
 Set and sustained ;—thou, who didst wrap the cloud  
 Of infancy around us, that thyself,  
 Therein, with our simplicity awhile 85  
 Might'st hold, on earth, communion undisturbed ;  
 Who from the anarchy of dreaming sleep,  
 Or from its death-like void, with punctual care,  
 And touch as gentle as the morning light,  
 Restor'st us, daily, to the powers of sense 90  
 And reason's stedfast rule—thou, thou alone  
 Art everlasting, and the blessed Spirits,  
 Which thou includest, as the sea her waves :  
 For adoration thou endur'st ; endure  
 For consciousness the motions of thy will ; 95  
 For apprehension those transcendent truths  
 Of the pure intellect, that stand as laws  
 (Submission constituting strength and power)  
 Even to thy Being's infinite majesty !  
 This universe shall pass away—a work 100  
 Glorious ! because the shadow of thy might,  
 A step, or link, for intercourse with thee.  
 Ah ! if the time must come, in which my feet  
 No more shall stray where meditation leads,  
 By flowing stream, through wood, or craggy wild, 105  
 Loved haunts like these ; the unimprisoned Mind  
 May yet have scope to range among her own,  
 Her thoughts, her images, her high desires.

72 nor 1827: or 1814–20

87–91 Whose care doth [chase ?] the Anarch that disturbs  
 Our dreams, and doth restore us every day  
 To reason's blessed light MS.

100 work 1827: frame 1814–20

If the dear faculty of sight should fail,  
 Still, it may be allowed me to remember 110  
 What visionary powers of eye and soul  
 In youth were mine; when, stationed on the top  
 Of some huge hill—expectant, I beheld  
 The sun rise up, from distant climes returned  
 Darkness to chase, and sleep; and bring the day 115  
 His bounteous gift! or saw him toward the deep  
 Sink, with a retinue of flaming clouds  
 Attended; then, my spirit was entranced  
 With joy exalted to beatitude;  
 The measure of my soul was filled with bliss, 120  
 And holiest love; as earth, sea, air, with light,  
 With pomp, with glory, with magnificence!

“Those fervent raptures are for ever flown;  
 And, since their date, my soul hath undergone  
 Change manifold, for better or for worse: 125  
 Yet cease I not to struggle, and aspire  
 Heavenward; and chide the part of me that flags,  
 Through sinful choice; or dread necessity  
 On human nature from above imposed.  
 ’Tis, by comparison, an easy task 130  
 Earth to despise; but, to converse with heaven—  
 This is not easy:—to relinquish all  
 We have, or hope, of happiness and joy,  
 And stand in freedom loosened from this world,  
 I deem not arduous; but must needs confess 135  
 That ’tis a thing impossible to frame  
 Conceptions equal to the soul’s desires;  
 And the most difficult of tasks to *keep*  
 Heights which the soul is competent to gain.  
 —Man is of dust: ethereal hopes are his, 140  
 Which, when they should sustain themselves aloft,  
 Want due consistence; like a pillar of smoke,  
 That with majestic energy from earth  
 Rises; but, having reached the thinner air,  
 Melts, and dissolves, and is no longer seen. 145  
 From this infirmity of mortal kind

116 toward 1832: tow’rds 1814–20: tow’rd 1827 126 and 1827:  
 and to 1814–20

Sorrow proceeds, which else were not ; at least,  
 If grief be something hallowed and ordained,  
 If, in proportion, it be just and meet,  
 Yet, through this weakness of the general heart, 150  
 Is it enabled to maintain its hold  
 In that excess which conscience disapproves.  
 For who could sink and settle to that point  
 Of selfishness ; so senseless who could be  
 As long and perseveringly to mourn 155  
 For any object of his love, removed  
 From this unstable world, if he could fix  
 A satisfying view upon that state  
 Of pure, imperishable, blessedness,  
 Which reason promises, and holy writ 160  
 Ensures to all believers ?—Yet mistrust  
 Is of such incapacity, methinks,  
 No natural branch ; despondency far less ;  
 And, least of all, is absolute despair.  
 —And, if there be whose tender frames have drooped 165  
 Even to the dust ; apparently, through weight  
 Of anguish unrelieved, and lack of power  
 An agonizing sorrow to transmute ;  
 Deem not that proof is here of hope withheld  
 When wanted most ; a confidence impaired 170  
 So pitifully, that, having ceased to see  
 With bodily eyes, they are borne down by love  
 Of what is lost, and perish through regret.  
 Oh ! no, the innocent Sufferer often sees  
 Too clearly ; feels too vividly ; and longs 175  
 To realize the vision, with intense  
 And over-constant yearning ;—there—there lies  
 The excess, by which the balance is destroyed.  
 Too, too contracted are these walls of flesh,

147-52 And pitiable weakness of man's heart

Sorrow and grief proceed which else were not ;

Or would exist only to sanctify

The spirit and invigorate the mind

Being themselves controlled while they chastise C

150-1 so 1837: Through this, 'tis able to maintain its hold, 1814-32

154/5 In passing estimates of loss and gain, 1814-20 163 less ;

1837: less. 1814-32 164 added 1837 169 so 1837: Infer not

hence a hope from those withheld 1814-32 174 so 1837: . . . full

oft the innocent Sufferer sees 1814-32

This vital warmth too cold, these visual orbs,                      180  
 Though inconceivably endowed, too dim  
 For any passion of the soul that leads  
 To ecstasy; and, all the crooked paths  
 Of time and change disdaining, takes its course  
 Along the line of limitless desires.                      185  
 I, speaking now from such disorder free,  
 Nor rapt, nor craving, but in settled peace,  
 I cannot doubt that they whom you deplore  
 Are glorified; or, if they sleep, shall wake  
 From sleep, and dwell with God in endless love.                      190  
 Hope, below this, consists not with belief  
 In mercy, carried infinite degrees  
 Beyond the tenderness of human hearts:  
 Hope, below this, consists not with belief  
 In perfect wisdom, guiding mightiest power,                      195  
 That finds no limits but her own pure will.

“Here then we rest; not fearing for our creed  
 The worst that human reasoning can achieve,  
 To unsettle or perplex it: yet with pain  
 Acknowledging, and grievous self-reproach,                      200  
 That, though immovably convinced, we want  
 Zeal, and the virtue to exist by faith  
 As soldiers live by courage; as, by strength  
 Of heart, the sailor fights with roaring seas.  
 Alas! the endowment of immortal power                      205  
 Is matched unequally with custom, time,<sup>1</sup>  
 And domineering faculties of sense  
 In *all*; in most with superadded foes,  
 Idle temptations; open vanities,  
 Ephemeral offspring of the unblushing world;                      210  
 And, in the private regions of the mind,  
 Ill-governed passions, ranklings of despite,  
 Immoderate wishes, pining discontent,

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 424.

187 rapt 1820: sleep [*sic*] 1814                      196 her 1827: its 1814–20  
 197–9 *so* 1827:                      . . . not fearing to be left

In undisturbed possession of our creed  
 For aught that human reasoning can achieve  
 To unsettle or perplex us 1814–20.

209/10 Of dissipation; countless, still-renewed, 1814–20

Distress and care. What then remains?—To seek  
 Those helps for his occasions ever near 215  
 Who lacks not will to use them; vows, renewed  
 On the first motion of a holy thought;  
 Vigils of contemplation; praise; and prayer—  
 A stream, which, from the fountain of the heart  
 Issuing, however feebly, nowhere flows 220  
 Without access of unexpected strength.  
 But, above all, the victory is most sure  
 For him, who, seeking faith by virtue, strives  
 To yield entire submission to the law  
 Of conscience—conscience revered and obeyed, 225  
 As God's most intimate presence in the soul,  
 And his most perfect image in the world.  
 —Endeavour thus to live; these rules regard;  
 These helps solicit; and a stedfast seat  
 Shall then be yours among the happy few 230  
 Who dwell on earth, yet breathe empyreal air,  
 Sons of the morning. For your nobler part,  
 Ere disencumbered of her mortal chains,  
 Doubt shall be quelled and trouble chased away;  
 With only such degree of sadness left 235  
 As may support longings of pure desire;  
 And strengthen love, rejoicing secretly  
 In the sublime attractions of the grave."

While, in this strain, the venerable Sage  
 Poured forth his aspirations, and announced 240  
 His judgments, near that lonely house we paced  
 A plot of green-sward, seemingly preserved  
 By nature's care from wreck of scattered stones,  
 And from encroachment of encircling heath:  
 Small space! but, for reiterated steps, 245  
 Smooth and commodious; as a stately deck  
 Which to and fro the mariner is used  
 To tread for pastime, talking with his mates,  
 Or haply thinking of far-distant friends,  
 While the ship glides before a steady breeze. 250  
 Stillness prevailed around us: and the voice  
 That spake was capable to lift the soul  
 Toward regions yet more tranquil. But, methought,

That he, whose fixed despondency had given  
 Impulse and motive to that strong discourse, 255  
 Was less upraised in spirit than abashed ;  
 Shrinking from admonition, like a man  
 Who feels that to exhort is to reproach.  
 Yet not to be diverted from his aim,  
 The Sage continued :—

“For that other loss, 260  
 The loss of confidence in social man,  
 By the unexpected transports of our age  
 Carried so high, that every thought, which looked  
 Beyond the temporal destiny of the Kind,  
 To many seemed superfluous—as, no cause 265  
 Could e’er for such exalted confidence  
 Exist ; so, none is now for fixed despair :  
 The two extremes are equally disowned  
 By reason : if, with sharp recoil, from one  
 You have been driven far as its opposite, 270  
 Between them seek the point whereon to build  
 Sound expectations. So doth he advise  
 Who shared at first the illusion ; but was soon  
 Cast from the pedestal of pride by shocks  
 Which Nature gently gave, in woods and fields ; 275  
 Nor unreprieved by Providence, thus speaking  
 To the inattentive children of the world :  
 ‘Vain-glorious Generation ! what new powers  
 On you have been conferred ? what gifts, withheld  
 From your progenitors, have ye received, 280  
 Fit recompense of new desert ? what claim  
 Are ye prepared to urge, that my decrees  
 For you should undergo a sudden change ;  
 And the weak functions of one busy day,  
 Reclaiming and extirpating, perform 285  
 What all the slowly-moving years of time,  
 With their united force, have left undone ?  
 By nature’s gradual processes be taught ;

266 *so* 1845: For such exalted confidence could e’er 1814–43

267 *fixed* 1827: such 1814–20 268 *disowned* 1827: remote 1814–20

269–71 *so* 1827: From Truth and Reason ;—do not, then, confound

One with the other, but reject them both ;

And choose the middle point, *etc.* 1814–20

272 *So* 1827: This 1814–20

By story be confounded! Ye aspire  
 Rashly, to fall once more; and that false fruit, 290  
 Which, to your overweening spirits, yields  
 Hope of a fight celestial, will produce  
 Misery and shame. But Wisdom of her sons  
 Shall not the less, though late, be justified.'

"Such timely warning," said the Wanderer, "gave 295  
 That visionary voice; and, at this day,  
 When a Tartarean darkness overspreads  
 The groaning nations; when the impious rule,  
 By will or by established ordinance,  
 Their own dire agents, and constrain the good 300  
 To acts which they abhor; though I bewail  
 This triumph, yet the pity of my heart  
 Prevents me not from owning, that the law,  
 By which mankind now suffers, is most just.  
 For by superior energies; more strict 305  
 Affiance in each other; faith more firm  
 In their unhallowed principles; the bad  
 Have fairly earned a victory o'er the weak,  
 The vacillating, inconsistent good.  
 Therefore, not unconsolated, I wait—in hope 310  
 To see the moment, when the righteous cause  
 Shall gain defenders zealous and devout  
 As they who have opposed her; in which Virtue  
 Will, to her efforts, tolerate no bounds  
 That are not lofty as her rights; aspiring 315  
 By impulse of her own ethereal zeal.  
 That spirit only can redeem mankind;  
 And when that sacred spirit shall appear,  
 Then shall *our* triumph be complete as theirs.  
 Yet, should this confidence prove vain, the wise 320  
 Have still the keeping of their proper peace;  
 Are guardians of their own tranquillity.  
 They act, or they recede, observe, and feel;  
 'Knowing the heart of man is set to be'<sup>1</sup>  
 The centre of this world, about the which 325  
 Those revolutions of disturbances

<sup>1</sup> See Note, p. 424.

324/5 "Knowing"—(to adopt the energetic words  
 Which a time-hallowed Poet hath employed) 1814-20

Still roll ; where all the aspects of misery  
 Predominate ; whose strong effects are such  
 As he must bear, being powerless to redress ;  
*And that unless above himself he can* 330  
*Erect himself, how poor a thing is Man!*<sup>1</sup>

“Happy is he who lives to understand,  
 Not human nature only, but explores  
 All natures,—to the end that he may find  
 The law that governs each ; and where begins 335  
 The union, the partition where, that makes  
 Kind and degree, among all visible Beings ;  
 The constitutions, powers, and faculties,  
 Which they inherit,—cannot step beyond,—  
 And cannot fall beneath ; that do assign 340  
 To every class its station and its office,  
 Through all the mighty commonwealth of things ;  
 Up from the creeping plant to sovereign Man.  
 Such converse, if directed by a meek,  
 Sincere, and humble spirit, teaches love : 345  
 For knowledge is delight ; and such delight  
 Breeds love : yet, suited as it rather is  
 To thought and to the climbing intellect,  
 It teaches less to love, than to adore ;  
 If that be not indeed the highest love !” 350

“Yet,” said I, tempted here to interpose,  
 “The dignity of life is not impaired

<sup>1</sup> Daniel.

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- 333–7 Observes, explores, for this that he may find  
 The law, and what it is, and where begins  
 The union and disunion, that which makes  
 Degree or kind in every shape of being MS. R
- 339–41 And habits and enjoyments that assign  
 To every class its office or abode MS. R
- 343 creeping] stone or MS. R      344 meek] mild MS.
- 344–5 Such converse, if but fervent, teaches love MS. R
- 347 Breeds] Is MS. R
- 351–7 Yet something hangs about our daily life (And yet a something to  
 our nature cleaves)  
 Not to be (Which is not) satisfied with this, and he  
 Is yet a happier . . . descends (*as text*)  
 At Nature’s call in Reason’s leisure hours  
 And his affections gently entertains MS.

By aught that innocently satisfies  
 The humbler cravings of the heart ; and he  
 Is still a happier man, who, for those heights 355  
 Of speculation not unfit, descends ;  
 And such benign affections cultivates  
 Among the inferior kinds ; not merely those  
 That he may call his own, and which depend,  
 As individual objects of regard, 360  
 Upon his care, from whom he also looks  
 For signs and tokens of a mutual bond ;  
 But others, far beyond this narrow sphere,  
 Whom, for the very sake of love, he loves.  
 Nor is it a mean praise of rural life 365  
 And solitude, that they do favour most,  
 Most frequently call forth, and best sustain,  
 These pure sensations ; that can penetrate  
 The obstreperous city ; on the barren seas  
 Are not unfelt ; and much might recommend, 370  
 How much they might inspire and endear,  
 The loneliness of this sublime retreat !”

“Yes,” said the Sage, resuming the discourse  
 Again directed to his downcast Friend,  
 “If, with the froward will and grovelling soul 375  
 Of man, offended, liberty is here,  
 And invitation every hour renewed,  
 To mark *their* placid state, who never heard  
 Of a command which they have power to break,  
 Or rule which they are tempted to transgress : 380  
 These with a soothed or elevated heart,  
 May we behold ; their knowledge register ;  
 Observe their ways ; and, free from envy, find  
 Complacency there :—but wherefore this to you ?  
 I guess that, welcome to your lonely hearth, 385  
 The redbreast, ruffled up by winter’s cold  
 Into a ‘feathery bunch,’ feeds at your hand :  
 A box, perchance, is from your casement hung  
 For the small wren to build in ;—not in vain,

355 Is still a 1850: Is a still 1814-45: Is yet a MS. 384/5 And  
 takes the after-knowledge as it comes MS. R 371 . . . endear and  
 recommend MS. 386-7 so 1837: The Redbreast feeds in winter  
 from your hand MSS., 1814-20

The barriers disregarding that surround 390  
 This deep abiding place, before your sight  
 Mounts on the breeze the butterfly; and soars,  
 Small creature as she is, from earth's bright flowers,  
 Into the dewy clouds. Ambition reigns  
 In the waste wilderness: the Soul ascends 395  
 Drawn towards her native firmament of heaven,  
 When the fresh eagle, in the month of May,  
 Upborne, at evening, on replenished wing,  
 This shaded valley leaves; and leaves the dark  
 Empurpled hills, conspicuously renewing 400  
 A proud communication with the sun  
 Low sunk beneath the horizon!—List!—I heard,  
 From yon huge breast of rock, a voice sent forth  
 As if the visible mountain made the cry.  
 Again!"—The effect upon the soul was such 405  
 As he expressed: from out the mountain's heart  
 The solemn voice appeared to issue, startling  
 The blank air—for the region all around  
 Stood empty of all shape of life, and silent  
 Save for that single cry, the unanswer'd bleat 410  
 Of a poor lamb—left somewhere to itself,  
 The plaintive spirit of the solitude!  
 He paused, as if unwilling to proceed,

395 waste] blank MS. 396 Drawn towards 1837: Towards 1814-32

399 shaded 1820: shady MS., 1814

402 . . . horizon. While I trace

Or strive at least imperfectly to trace

These obligations of the human soul

Mysteriously sustained, even now I hear MS.

403 so 1845: a solemn bleat;

Sent forth as if it were the Mountain's voice, MS., 1814-43

405-11 And hark! again that solemn bleat, there is

No other, and the region, all around

Is silent, empty of all shape of life.

It is a Lamb—*etc.* MS.

405-6 Again! In the surrounding vacancy

The effect upon the soul was verily such

As he expressed for from the mountain's self C

406-11 so 1845: . . . for, from the mountain's heart

The solemn bleat appeared to come; there was

No other—and the region all around

Stood silent, empty of all shape of life.

—It was a Lamb—*etc.* 1814-20: 1827-43

Through consciousness that silence in such place  
 Was best, the most affecting eloquence. 415  
 But soon his thoughts returned upon themselves,  
 And, in soft tone of speech, thus he resumed.

“Ah! if the heart, too confidently raised,  
 Perchance too highly occupied, or lulled  
 Too easily, despise or overlook 420  
 The vassalage that binds her to the earth,  
 Her sad dependence upon time, and all  
 The trepidations of mortality,  
 What place so destitute and void—but there  
 The little flower her vanity shall check ; 425  
 The trailing worm reprove her thoughtless pride ?

“These craggy regions, these chaotic wilds,  
 Does that benignity pervade, that warms  
 The mole contented with her darksome walk  
 In the cold ground ; and to the emmet gives 430  
 Her foresight, and intelligence that makes  
 The tiny creatures strong by social league ;  
 Supports the generations, multiplies  
 Their tribes, till we behold a spacious plain  
 Or grassy bottom, all, with little hills— 435  
 Their labour, covered, as a lake with waves ;  
 Thousands of cities, in the desert place  
 Built up of life, and food, and means of life!  
 Nor wanting here, to entertain the thought,  
 Creatures that in communities exist 440  
 Less, as might seem, for general guardianship  
 Or through dependence upon mutual aid,  
 Than by participation of delight  
 And a strict love of fellowship, combined.  
 What other spirit can it be that prompts 445  
 The gilded summer flies to mix and weave  
 Their sports together in the solar beam,  
 Or in the gloom of twilight hum their joy ?  
 More obviously the self-same influence rules  
 The feathered kinds ; the fieldfare’s pensive flock, 450

417 thus he 1837: he thus 1814-32 431 intelligence 1827: the  
 intelligence 1814-20 432 creatures] emmet MS. 436 lake]  
 sea MS. 450 flock 1827: flocks 1814-20

The cawing rooks, and sea-mews from afar,  
 Hovering above these inland solitudes,  
 By the rough wind unscattered, at whose call  
 Up through the trenches of the long-drawn vales  
 Their voyage was begun: nor is its power 455  
 Unfelt among the sedentary fowl  
 That seek yon pool, and there prolong their stay  
 In silent congress; or together roused  
 Take flight; while with their clang the air resounds.  
 And, over all, in that ethereal vault, 460  
 Is the mute company of changeful clouds;  
 Bright apparition, suddenly put forth,  
 The rainbow smiling on the faded storm;  
 The mild assemblage of the starry heavens;  
 And the great sun, earth's universal lord! 465

“How bountiful is Nature! he shall find  
 Who seeks not; and to him, who hath not asked,  
 Large measures shall be dealt. Three sabbath-days  
 Are scarcely told, since, on a service bent  
 Of mere humanity, you clomb those heights; 470  
 And what a marvellous and heavenly show  
 Was suddenly revealed!—the swains moved on,  
 And heeded not: you lingered, you perceived  
 And felt, deeply as living man could feel.  
 There is a luxury in self-dispraise; 475  
 And inward self-disparagement affords  
 To meditative spleen a grateful feast.  
 Trust me, pronouncing on your own desert,  
 You judge unthankfully: distempered nerves  
 Infect the thoughts: the languor of the frame 480

451–3 Rooks cawing loud, or, as they pass or light  
 Announced by shadows gliding on the ground  
 In multitudes; and sea-mews from afar  
 Which at some boisterous time when fleets of ships  
 Upon the angry surface of the main  
 Are broken and confounded, steer their course  
 And hover o'er the troubled Element

Unscattered by the wind, at whose loud call MS. 58

453 so 1827; 1814–20 as MS. 454 added 1837 455 was begun]  
 they began C 460 vault 1832: arch MS., 1814–27 461 Is  
 the mute] The fleecy MS. 472 suddenly 1827: to your sight MS.,  
 1814–32 473 you perceive 1837: and perceived MS., 1814–32  
 474 added 1837

Depresses the soul's vigour. Quit your couch—  
 Cleave not so fondly to your moody cell;  
 Nor let the hallowed powers, that shed from heaven  
 Stillness and rest, with disapproving eye  
 Look down upon your taper, through a watch 485  
 Of midnight hours, unseasonably twinkling  
 In this deep Hollow, like a sullen star  
 Dimly reflected in a lonely pool.  
 Take courage, and withdraw yourself from ways  
 That run not parallel to nature's course. 490  
 Rise with the lark! your matins shall obtain  
 Grace, be their composition what it may,  
 If but with hers performed; climb once again,  
 Climb every day, those ramparts; meet the breeze  
 Upon their tops, adventurous as a bee 495  
 That from your garden thither soars, to feed  
 On new-blown heath; let yon commanding rock  
 Be your frequented watch-tower; roll the stone  
 In thunder down the mountains; with all your might  
 Chase the wild goat; and if the bold red deer 500  
 Fly to those harbours, driven by hound and horn  
 Loud echoing, add your speed to the pursuit;  
 So, wearied to your hut shall you return,  
 And sink at evening into sound repose."

The Solitary lifted toward the hills 505  
 A kindling eye:—accordant feelings rushed  
 Into my bosom, whence these words broke forth:  
 "Oh! what a joy it were, in vigorous health,

483-4 Nor let the spirits that maintain repose  
 In heaven and earth *etc.* MS. 58

493-8 . . . Climb once again  
 These ramparts, daily climb, and ranging round  
 Their wide circumference, inhale thereon  
 Celestial air, the clefts and caverns seek  
 Fill'd with the strife of waters; roll the stone MS. 58

495-7 Upon their tops; and haply you shall there  
 Pass in your wanderings an adventurous bee  
 From your own garden, murmuring in the beds  
 Of blooming heath MS. 58

501 those 1837: these MS., 1814-32 504 sound repose] timely  
 sleep MS. 505-7 *om.* Q

506-7 *so* 1845: An animated eye; and thoughts were mine  
 Which this ejaculation clothed in words— 1814-20;  
 1827-43 *as text, but poetic for accordant*

To have a body (this our vital frame  
 With shrinking sensibility endued, 510  
 And all the nice regards of flesh and blood)  
 And to the elements surrender it  
 As if it were a spirit!—How divine,  
 The liberty, for frail, for mortal, man  
 To roam at large among unpeopled glens 515  
 And mountainous retirements, only trod  
 By devious footsteps; regions consecrate  
 To oldest time! and, reckless of the storm  
 That keeps the raven quiet in her nest,  
 Be as a presence or a motion—one 520  
 Among the many there; and while the mists  
 Flying, and rainy vapours, call out shapes  
 And phantoms from the crags and solid earth  
 As fast as a musician scatters sounds  
 Out of an instrument; and while the streams 525  
 (As at a first creation and in haste  
 To exercise their untried faculties)  
 Descending from the region of the clouds,  
 And starting from the hollows of the earth  
 More multitudinous every moment, rend 530  
 Their way before them—what a joy to roam  
 An equal among mightiest energies;  
 And haply sometimes with articulate voice,  
 Amid the deafening tumult, scarcely heard  
 By him that utters it, exclaim aloud, 535  
 ‘Rage on, ye elements! let moon and stars  
 Their aspects lend, and mingle in their turn  
 With this commotion (ruinous though it be)  
 From day to night, from night to day, prolonged!’ ”

513–15 . . . spirit, from mischance

Secure, and unobnoxious to distress!

What joy to wander in unpeopled Vales MS. 58

518 reckless] careless MS.

536–41 Be this continued so from month to month.

Whoe’er hath known such transports—even in youth MS. Q

536–9 so 1845: Be this continued so from day to day,

Nor let it have an end from month to month!” 1814–20

Be this etc.

Nor let the fierce commotion have an end,

Ruinous though it be, from month to month! 1827–43

"Yes," said the Wanderer, taking from my lips 540  
 The strain of transport, "whosoe'er in youth  
 Has, through ambition of his soul, given way  
 To such desires, and grasped at such delight,  
 Shall feel congenial stirrings late and long,  
 In spite of all the weakness that life brings, 545  
 Its cares and sorrows; he, though taught to own  
 The tranquillizing power of time, shall wake,  
 Wake sometimes to a noble restlessness—  
 Loving the sports which once he gloried in.

"Compatriot, Friend, remote are Garry's hills, 550  
 The streams far distant of your native glen;  
 Yet is their form and image here expressed  
 With brotherly resemblance. Turn your steps  
 Wherever fancy leads; by day, by night,  
 Are various engines working, not the same 555  
 As those with which your soul in youth was moved,  
 But by the great Artificer endowed  
 With no inferior power. You dwell alone;  
 You walk, you live, you speculate alone;  
 Yet doth remembrance, like a sovereign prince, 560  
 For you a stately gallery maintain  
 Of gay or tragic pictures. You have seen,  
 Have acted, suffered, travelled far, observed  
 With no incurious eye; and books are yours,  
 Within whose silent chambers treasure lies 565  
 Preserved from age to age; more precious far  
 Than that accumulated store of gold  
 And orient gems, which, for a day of need,  
 The Sultan hides deep in ancestral tombs.  
 These hoards of truth you can unlock at will: 570

544 congenial stirrings 1827: the stirrings of them MS., 1814-20

546-7 His disappointments, griefs, and vexing cares,

And heavier sorrows, he shall lift the load

Of his despondency, shall hear and wake MS. 58

549 sports MS., 1827: spots [*sic*] 1814-20 552/3 As by a duplicate, at least set forth MS., 1814-20 553 By a fraternal likeness

MS. 58 556 with 1837: by MS., 1814-32 557 endowed 1837: endowed MS., 1814-32 558 power. You] power. Though not deprived

The sight of human face, you MS.

565-71 Where lay the treasures of antiquity

Entombed, and music waits upon your touch MS.

569 deep in 1837: within 1814-32

And music waits upon your skilful touch,  
 Sounds which the wandering shepherd from these heights  
 Hears, and forgets his purpose ;—furnished thus,  
 How can you droop, if willing to be upraised ?

“A piteous lot it were to flee from Man— 575  
 Yet not rejoice in Nature. He, whose hours  
 Are by domestic pleasure uncaressed  
 And unenlivened ; who exists whole years  
 Apart from benefits received or done  
 'Mid the transactions of the bustling crowd ; 580  
 Who neither hears, nor feels a wish to hear,  
 Of the world's interests—such a one hath need  
 Of a quick fancy and an active heart,  
 That, for the day's consumption, books may yield  
 Food not unwholesome ; earth and air correct 585  
 His morbid humour, with delight supplied  
 Or solace, varying as the seasons change.  
 —Truth has her pleasure-grounds, her haunts of ease  
 And easy contemplation ; gay parterres,  
 And labyrinthine walks, her sunny glades 590  
 And shady groves in studied contrast—each,  
 For recreation, leading into each :  
 These may he range, if willing to partake  
 Their soft indulgences, and in due time  
 May issue thence, recruited for the tasks 595

574 upraised 1837: raised MS., 1814–32 579/80 Distress relieved  
 or injury sustained MS. 58 580 the bustling crowd] a bustling  
 world MS.

581–602 Cut off from its discoveries and fears  
 And baby passions, such a man has need  
 Of a quick fancy and a lively heart  
 That Books for his consumption may provide  
 A daily food of wholesome quality  
 And earth and air inspire him with delight,  
 Else what awaits him but the yew-tree shade  
 Of black and unproductive melancholy,  
 Within its circuit killing grass and flowers  
 The whole year through and banishing the sun  
 And the soft music of the shepherd's pipe MS. 58  
 585–7 *so* 1845: A not unwholesome food, and earth and air  
 Supply his morbid [pensive MS.] humour with delight  
 MS., 1814–32: 1837–43 *as text but omitting l. 587, added*  
*in 1845*

591–2 *so* 1837: And shady groves, for recreation framed MS., 1814–32

And course of service Truth requires from those  
 Who tend her altars, wait upon her throne,  
 And guard her fortresses. Who thinks, and feels,  
 And recognizes ever and anon  
 The breeze of nature stirring in his soul, 600  
 Why need such man go desperately astray,  
 And nurse 'the dreadful appetite of death ?'  
 If tired with systems, each in its degree  
 Substantial, and all crumbling in their turn,  
 Let him build systems of his own, and smile 605  
 At the fond work, demolished with a touch ;  
 If unreligious, let him be at once,  
 Among ten thousand innocents, enrolled  
 A pupil in the many-chambered school,  
 Where superstition weaves her airy dreams. 610

'Life's autumn past, I stand on winter's verge ;  
 And daily lose what I desire to keep :  
 Yet rather would I instantly decline  
 To the traditionary sympathies  
 Of a most rustic ignorance and take 615  
 A fearful apprehension from the owl  
 Or death-watch : and as readily rejoice,  
 If two auspicious magpies crossed my way ;—  
 To this would rather bend than see and hear  
 The repetitions wearisome of sense, 620  
 Where soul is dead, and feeling hath no place ;  
 Where knowledge, ill begun in cold remark  
 On outward things, with formal inference ends ;  
 Or, if the mind turn inward, she recoils  
 At once—or, not recoiling, is perplexed— 625  
 Lost in a gloom of uninspired research ;  
 Meanwhile, the heart within the heart, the seat  
 Where peace and happy consciousness should dwell,  
 On its own axis restlessly revolving,  
 Seeks, yet can nowhere find, the light of truth. 630

614-15 To the simplicities of childish days Or a *etc.* MS. 58 619 *so*  
 1827: This rather would I do MS., 1814-20 621/2 For purposes  
 of wisdom and delight MS. 58 624-5 *so* 1837: Or if the Mind turn  
 inward, 'tis perplexed MS., 1814-32 628 . . . conscience ought to  
 dwell MS. 629-30 *so* 1845: . . . restlessly revolves Yet nowhere  
 finds the cheering light of truth MS., 1814-43

"Upon the breast of new-created earth  
 Man walked ; and when and wheresoe'er he moved,  
 Alone or mated, solitude was not.  
 He heard, borne on the wind, the articulate voice  
 Of God ; and Angels to his sight appeared 635  
 Crowning the glorious hills of paradise ;  
 Or through the groves gliding like morning mist  
 Enkindled by the sun. He sate—and talked  
 With winged Messengers ; who daily brought  
 To his small island in the ethereal deep 640  
 Tidings of joy and love.—From those pure heights  
 (Whether of actual vision, sensible  
 To sight and feeling, or that in this sort  
 Have condescendingly been shadowed forth  
 Communications spiritually maintained, 645  
 And intuitions moral and divine)  
 Fell Human-kind—to banishment condemned  
 That flowing years repealed not : and distress  
 And grief spread wide ; but Man escaped the doom  
 Of destitution ;—solitude was not. 650  
 —Jehovah—shapeless Power above all Powers,  
 Single and one, the omnipresent God,  
 By vocal utterance, or blaze of light,  
 Or cloud of darkness, localised in heaven ;  
 On earth, enshrined within the wandering ark ; 655  
 Or, out of Sion, thundering from his throne  
 Between the Cherubim—on the chosen Race  
 Showered miracles, and ceased not to dispense  
 Judgments, that filled the land from age to age  
 With hope, and love, and gratitude, and fear ; 660

632-3 Man walked alone or mated and where'er

In that first blissful garden he reposed,

Or lodged, or wandered, solitude was not MS. 58

634 borne on 1837: upon MS., 1814-32

639-40 With Heaven's ambassador, familiar guest

In his green bower and heard of [ ] MS. 58

641 those 1837: these MS., 1814-32

647-50 Fell the first Parent ; banishment ensued

For all the race, and sorrow and distress

Were spread by him (And grief spread wide), and Man for Man's  
 Estate

Had cause to mourn ; but solitude was not MS. 58

653 By speaking voice MS. 58

And with amazement smote;—thereby to assert  
 His scorned, or unacknowledged, sovereignty.  
 And when the One, ineffable of name,  
 Of nature indivisible, withdrew  
 From mortal adoration or regard, 665  
 Not then was Deity engulfed; nor Man,  
 The rational creature, left, to feel the weight  
 Of his own reason, without sense or thought  
 Of higher reason and a purer will,  
 To benefit and bless, through mightier power:— 670  
 Whether the Persian—zealous to reject  
 Altar and image, and the inclusive walls  
 And roofs of temples built by human hands—  
 To loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,  
 With myrtle-wreathed tiara on his brow, 675  
 Presented sacrifice to moon and stars,  
 And to the winds and mother elements,  
 And the whole circle of the heavens, for him  
 A sensitive existence, and a God,  
 With lifted hands invoked, and songs of praise: 680  
 Or, less reluctantly to bonds of sense  
 Yielding his soul, the Babylonian framed  
 For influence undefined a personal shape;  
 And, from the plain, with toil immense, upreared  
 Tower eight times planted on the top of tower, 685  
 That Belus, nightly to his splendid couch  
 Descending, there might rest; upon that height  
 Pure and serene, diffused—to overlook  
 Winding Euphrates, and the city vast  
 Of his devoted worshippers, far-stretched, 690  
 With grove and field and garden interspersed;  
 Their town, and foodful region for support  
 Against the pressure of beleaguering war.

“Chaldean Shepherds, ranging trackless fields,  
 Beneath the concave of unclouded skies 695

664 Of 1827: In MS., 1814–20  
1814–20

675 brow 1827: brows MS.,

683–4 Metal or stone idolatrously served

And by their labour from the plain upreared MS. 58

687–8 so 1827: . . . and from that Height

Pure and serene, the Godhead overlook MS., 1814–20

Spread like a sea, in boundless solitude,  
 Looked on the polar star, as on a guide  
 And guardian of their course, that never closed  
 His stedfast eye. The planetary Five  
 With a submissive reverence they beheld ; 700  
 Watched, from the centre of their sleeping flocks,  
 Those radiant Mercuries, that seemed to move  
 Carrying through ether, in perpetual round,  
 Decrees and resolutions of the Gods ;  
 And, by their aspects, signifying works 705  
 Of dim futurity, to Man revealed.  
 —The imaginative faculty was lord  
 Of observations natural ; and, thus  
 Led on, those shepherds made report of stars  
 In set rotation passing to and fro, 710  
 Between the orbs of our apparent sphere  
 And its invisible counterpart, adorned  
 With answering constellations, under earth,  
 Removed from all approach of living sight  
 But present to the dead ; who, so they deemed, 715  
 Like those celestial messengers beheld  
 All accidents, and judges were of all.

“The lively Grecian, in a land of hills,  
 Rivers and fertile plains, and sounding shores,—  
 Under a cope of sky more variable, 720  
 Could find commodious place for every God,  
 Promptly received, as prodigally brought,  
 From the surrounding countries, at the choice

696 Spread like a sea, their life's support, and [? home], MS. 58

699 His stedfast eye, nor could mislead their steps

If danger press'd ; the planetary five MS. 58

704 Decrees and resolutions] The purposes and counsels MS.

707–9 These primitive astronomers pursued

The motions nightly traceable in heaven

Urged from within they made report of stars MS. 58

708–9 Of observations natural, led on

To moral inquisition bolder still

Thus nightly from within enjoined and urged

Those first astronomers intermingling dreams

Of their religion made report of stars MS. 58 (*alt. draft*)

710 set] apt MS.

714 Veiled, nor approachable by living Man

MS. 58 718 lively] spritely MS. 58

720 so 1837: Under a

cope of variegated sky MS., 1814–32

- Of all adventurers. With unrivalled skill,  
 As nicest observation furnished hints 725  
 For studious fancy, his quick hand bestowed  
 On fluent operations a fixed shape;  
 Metal or stone, idolatrously served.  
 And yet—triumphant o'er this pompous show  
 Of art, this palpable array of sense, 730  
 On every side encountered; in despite  
 Of the gross fictions chanted in the streets  
 By wandering Rhapsodists; and in contempt  
 Of doubt and bold denial hourly urged  
 Amid the wrangling schools—a SPIRIT hung, 735  
 Beautiful region! o'er thy towns and farms,  
 Statues and temples, and memorial tombs;  
 And emanations were perceived; and acts  
 Of immortality, in Nature's course,  
 Exemplified by mysteries, that were felt 740  
 As bonds, on grave philosopher imposed  
 And armed warrior; and in every grove  
 A gay or pensive tenderness prevailed,  
 When piety more awful had relaxed.  
 —'Take, running river, take these locks of mine'— 745  
 Thus would the Votary say—'this severed hair,  
 My vow fulfilling, do I here present,  
 Thankful for my beloved child's return.  
 Thy banks, Cephissus, he again hath trod,  
 Thy murmurs heard; and drunk the crystal lymph 750  
 With which thou dost refresh the thirsty lip,  
 And, all day long, moisten these flowery fields!'  
 And, doubtless, sometimes, when the hair was shed
- 724-7 His genius gave  
 With new invention and unrivall'd skill  
 To fluent operations personal form MS. 58
- 726 so 1837: did his hand bestow 1814-32 730 palpable] tangible  
 MS. 58 734 denial MS., 1837: denials 1814-32
- 740-3 And in her laws and mysteries being held  
 As Bonds, by grave Philosopher and [ ]  
 And armed warrior, cheerfulness prevailed MS. 58
- 746-9 Thus might a Votary say, the severed hair  
 Presenting humbly to his native stream,  
 "The consecrated gift has been thy due  
 Since first a child upon thy banks I played, MS. 58
- 752 so 1845: And moisten all day long MS., 1814-43
- 752/3 Accept the offering, and be ever kind  
 My prayers [to] grant, my wishes to fulfill.'

Upon the flowing stream, a thought arose  
 Of Life continuous, Being unimpaired ; 755  
 That hath been, is, and where it was and is  
 There shall endure,—existence unexposed  
 To the blind walk of mortal accident ;  
 From diminution safe and weakening age ;  
 While man grows old, and dwindles, and decays ; 760  
 And countless generations of mankind  
 Depart ; and leave no vestige where they trod.

“We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love ;  
 And, even as these are well and wisely fixed,  
 In dignity of being we ascend. 765  
 But what is error ?”—“Answer he who can !”  
 The Sceptic somewhat haughtily exclaimed :  
 “Love, Hope, and Admiration—are they not  
 Mad Fancy’s favourite vassals ? Does not life  
 Use them, full oft, as pioneers to ruin, 770  
 Guides to destruction ? Is it well to trust  
 Imagination’s light when reason’s fails,  
 The unguarded taper where the guarded faints ?  
 —Stoop from those heights, and soberly declare  
 What error is ; and, of our errors, which 775  
 Doth most debase the mind ; the genuine seats  
 Of power, where are they ? Who shall regulate,  
 With truth, the scale of intellectual rank ?”

“Methinks,” persuasively the Sage replied,  
 “That for this arduous office you possess 780  
 Some rare advantages. Your early days  
 A grateful recollection must supply  
 Of much exalted good by Heaven vouchsafed

Such frame of words the Votary might use,  
 And thus perhaps might silently prolong  
 His inward meditation, while he stood

And eyed the current as it passed along. MS. 58

757 so 1827: There shall be,—seen, and heard, and felt, and known,  
 And recognized,—existence *etc.* MS., 1814–20

763 Hope and] and by MS. 765/6 As they are placed erroneously we  
 fall MS. 58 766–75 But what is error ? and of errors which MS. 58

782–90 A feeling recollection may supply

Of much exalted good that may attend

Upon a humble state. You well must know

That on the lap religion may be learned MS. 58

783–4 so 1827: . . . that may attend Upon the very humblest *etc.* 1814–20

To dignify the humblest state.—Your voice  
 Hath, in my hearing, often testified 785  
 That poor men's children, they, and they alone,  
 By their condition taught, can understand  
 The wisdom of the prayer that daily asks  
 For daily bread. A consciousness is yours  
 How feelingly religion may be learned 790  
 In smoky cabins, from a mother's tongue—  
 Heard while the dwelling vibrates to the din  
 Of the contiguous torrent, gathering strength  
 At every moment—and, with strength, increase  
 Of fury; or, while snow is at the door, 795  
 Assaulting and defending, and the wind,  
 A sightless labourer, whistles at his work—  
 Fearful; but resignation tempers fear,  
 And piety is sweet to infant minds.  
 —The Shepherd-lad, that in the sunshine carves, 800  
 On the green turf, a dial—to divide  
 The silent hours; and who to that report  
 Can portion out his pleasures, and adapt,  
 Throughout a long and lonely summer's day  
 His round of pastoral duties, is not left 805  
 With less intelligence for *moral* things  
 Of gravest import. Early he perceives,  
 Within himself, a measure and a rule,  
 Which to the sun of truth he can apply,  
 That shines for him, and shines for all mankind. 810  
 Experience daily fixing his regards  
 On nature's wants, he knows how few they are,  
 And where they lie, how answered and appeased.  
 This knowledge ample recompense affords  
 For manifold privations; he refers 815

791 tongue] voice MS. 58

792–5 Its music blending with the lonesome wind

While showers descend, or snow is at the door MS.

793–5 . . . torrent, swoln with rains

And furious, or while snow is at the door. MS. 58 (*later draft*)

804 *added* 1837

811–13 He, by experience taught, can understand

And feel the wisdom of the prayer that asks

For daily bread, he knows that Nature's wants

Are few and plain, yet not to be appeased

But by endeavours keeping pace with time. MS. 58

His notions to this standard ; on this rock  
 Rests his desires ; and hence, in after life,  
 Soul-strengthening patience, and sublime content.  
 Imagination—not permitted here  
 To waste her powers, as in the worldling's mind, 820  
 On fickle pleasures, and superfluous cares,  
 And trivial ostentation—is left free  
 And puissant to range the solemn walks  
 Of time and nature, girded by a zone  
 That, while it binds, invigorates and supports. 825  
 Acknowledge, then, that whether by the side  
 Of his poor hut, or on the mountain-top,  
 Or in the cultured field, a Man so bred  
 (Take from him what you will upon the score  
 Of ignorance or illusion) lives and breathes 830  
 For noble purposes of mind : his heart  
 Beats to the heroic song of ancient days ;  
 His eye distinguishes, his soul creates.  
 And those illusions, which excite the scorn  
 Or move the pity of unthinking minds, 835  
 Are they not mainly outward ministers  
 Of inward conscience ? with whose service charged  
 They came and go, appeared and disappear,  
 Diverting evil purposes, remorse  
 Awakening, chastening an intemperate grief, 840  
 Or pride of heart abating : and, when'er  
 For less important ends those phantoms move,  
 Who would forbid them, if their presence serve,  
 On thinly-peopled mountains and wild heaths,  
 Filling a space, else vacant, to exalt 845  
 The forms of Nature, and enlarge her powers ?

"Once more to distant ages of the world  
 Let us revert, and place before our thoughts  
 The face which rural solitude might wear  
 To the unenlightened swains of pagan Greece. 850

828 so bred 1827: like this MS., 1814–20 838 came . . . appeared  
 1827: come . . . appear 1814–20

844 so 1845: Among wild mountains and unpeopled heaths, 1814–43  
 Among wild hills and thinly peopled shores, C

847 Let us revert and contemplate the face  
 Which Nature in her solitudes might wear  
 To the unenlightened sons . . . C

—In that fair clime, the lonely herdsman, stretched  
 On the soft grass through half a summer's day,  
 With music lulled his indolent repose:  
 And, in some fit of weariness, if he,  
 When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear 855  
 A distant strain, far sweeter than the sounds  
 Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetched,  
 Even from the blazing chariot of the sun,  
 A beardless Youth, who touched a golden lute,  
 And filled the illumined groves with ravishment. 860  
 The nightly hunter, lifting a bright eye  
 Up towards the crescent moon, with grateful heart  
 Called on the lovely wanderer who bestowed  
 That timely light, to share his joyous sport:  
 And hence, a beaming Goddess with her Nymphs, 865  
 Across the lawn and through the darksome grove,  
 Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes  
 By echo multiplied from rock or cave,  
 Swept in the storm of chase; as moon and stars  
 Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven, 870  
 When winds are blowing strong. The traveller slaked  
 His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thanked  
 The Naiad. Sunbeams, upon distant hills  
 Gliding apace, with shadows in their train,  
 Might, with small help from fancy, be transformed 875  
 Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.  
 The Zephyrs fanning, as they passed, their wings,  
 Lacked not, for love, fair objects whom they wooed  
 With gentle whisper. Withered boughs grotesque,  
 Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary age, 880

861-2 so 1837: . . . lifting up his eyes Towards the MS., 1814-32

870 heaven 1827: heavens 1814-20

871-2 The youthful Maid

Or if not she the Lover at her side  
 Looking with earnest eye into the depth  
 Of a still lake amid the glimmering [groves?]  
 Of plants that there were nourished would create  
 Helped by reflection of (a human face) her own fair face  
 Some beautiful Inhabitant who there  
 Might dwell in calm security unknown  
 To mortal creature: Hence the green-haired brood .  
 Of Water Nymphs. And tempted to repose (readily induced)  
 In(To) like belief the Traveller, when he slaked  
 His thirst from rill or gushing fount would thank Ç

From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth  
 In the low vale, or on steep mountain-side;  
 And, sometimes, intermixed with stirring horns  
 Of the live deer, or goat's depending beard,—  
 These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood 885  
 Of gamesome Deities; or Pan himself,  
 The simple shepherd's awe-inspiring God!"

The strain was aptly chosen; and I could mark  
 Its kindly influence, o'er the yielding brow  
 Of our Companion, gradually diffused; 890  
 While, listening, he had paced the noiseless turf,  
 Like one whose untired ear a murmuring stream  
 Detains; but tempted now to interpose,  
 He with a smile exclaimed:—

“ 'Tis well you speak  
 At a safe distance from our native land, 895  
 And from the mansions where our youth was taught.  
 The true descendants of those godly men  
 Who swept from Scotland, in a flame of zeal,  
 Shrine, altar, image, and the massy piles  
 That harboured them,—the souls retaining yet 900  
 The churlish features of that after-race  
 Who fled to woods, caverns, and jutting rocks,  
 In deadly scorn of superstitious rites,  
 Or what their scruples construed to be such—  
 How, think you, would they tolerate this scheme 905  
 Of fine propensities, that tends, if urged  
 Far as it might be urged, to sow afresh  
 The weeds of Romish phantasy, in vain  
 Uprooted; would re-consecrate our wells  
 To good Saint Fillan and to fair Saint Anne; 910

888 *so* 1845: No apter Strain could have been chosen: I marked 1814–20:

As this apt strain proceeded, I could mark 1827–43

889 o'er 1827: on 1814–20

888–94 The pale Recluse who hitherto had sate  
 On the grey stone, hearkening in silent mood  
 Like one who listens to a murmuring stream  
 Untired, was tempted here to interpose  
 And with a smile *etc.* MS. 58

902 *so* 1837: to caves and clefts of hollow rock MS.: to caves, and woods,  
 and naked rocks, 1814–32

910 To fair St. Helen and to good St. Anne MS. 58

And from long banishment recal Saint Giles,  
 To watch again with tutelary love  
 O'er stately Edinborough throned on crags ?  
 A blessed restoration, to behold  
 The patron, on the shoulders of his priests, 915  
 Once more parading through her crowded streets  
 Now simply guarded by the sober powers  
 Of science, and philosophy, and sense!"

This answer followed.—"You have turned my thoughts  
 Upon our brave Progenitors, who rose 920  
 Against idolatry with warlike mind,  
 And shrunk from vain observances, to lurk  
 In woods, and dwell under impending rocks  
 Ill-sheltered, and oft wanting fire and food ;  
 Why ?—for this very reason that they felt, 925  
 And did acknowledge, wheresoe'er they moved,  
 A spiritual presence, oft-times misconceived,  
 But still a high dependence, a divine  
 Bounty and government, that filled their hearts  
 With joy, and gratitude, and fear, and love ; 930  
 And from their fervent lips drew hymns of praise,  
 That through the desert rang. Though favoured less,  
 Far less, than these, yet such, in their degree,  
 Were those bewildered Pagans of old time.  
 Beyond their own poor natures and above 935  
 They looked ; were humbly thankful for the good  
 Which the warm sun solicited, and earth  
 Bestowed ; were gladsome,—and their moral sense  
 They fortified with reverence for the Gods ;  
 And they had hopes that overstepped the Grave. 940

"Now, shall our great Discoverers," he exclaimed,  
 Raising his voice triumphantly, "obtain

923-4 *so* 1845 (*and* 1837-43, *but* beneath *for* under):

In caves, and woods, and under dismal rocks,

Deprived of shelter, covering, fire, and food ; 1814-32 ; *so* MS., *but* In  
 caves and in the clefts of ;

932 *so* 1827: With which the desarts MS., 1814-20

937-9 Which they received at Nature's hand, their will

They check[ed] and fortified their moral sense,

Their hopes by chearful reverence for the Gods MS. 58

941-79 Now shall profound (our sage) Philosophers be poor  
 Compared with these. Shall Men for whom our age

From sense and reason less than these obtained,  
 Though far misled ? Shall men for whom our age  
 Unbaffled powers of vision hath prepared, 945  
 To explore the world without and world within,  
 Be joyless as the blind ? Ambitious spirits—  
 Whom earth, at this late season, hath produced  
 To regulate the moving spheres, and weigh  
 The planets in the hollow of their hand ; 950  
 And they who rather dive than soar, whose pains  
 Have solved the elements, or analysed  
 The thinking principle—shall they in fact  
 Prove a degraded Race ? and what avails  
 Renown, if their presumption make them such ? 955  
 Oh ! there is laughter at their work in heaven !  
 Enquire of ancient Wisdom ; go, demand  
 Of mighty Nature, if 'twas ever meant  
 That we should pry far off yet be unraised ;  
 That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore, 960  
 Viewing all objects unremittingly  
 In disconnection dead and spiritless ;  
 And still dividing, and dividing still,  
 Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied  
 With the perverse attempt, while littleness 965  
 May yet become more little ; waging thus  
 An impious warfare with the very life  
 Of our own souls !

And if indeed there be  
 An all-pervading Spirit, upon whom  
 Our dark foundations rest, could he design 970  
 That this magnificent effect of power,

The optic glass of Science hath prepared,  
 Both for the world within and world without,  
 Be joyless as the blind ? Ambitious souls  
 Whom Earth as if to recompense her loss  
 Of bodily Stature, has produced at length  
 To wage with heaven a second war, to weigh  
 The planets in the hollow of their hand  
 And tame the elements—shall they, in fact,  
 Be but a dwindled race. Accuse me not

Of boldness, unknown Wanderer as I am MS. 58

947 spirits 1837: Souls 1814-32 952-3 elements or our bodily  
 life Traced to its fountain MS. (*another draft*) 958-68 v. note p. 428 and  
*Addendum to MS. B of "The Ruined Cottage"*, ll. 58-68, p. 402 970/1 Or  
 will his rites and services permit, 1814-20

The earth we tread, the sky that we behold  
 By day, and all the pomp which night reveals;  
 That these—and that superior mystery  
 Our vital frame, so fearfully devised, 975  
 And the dread soul within it—should exist  
 Only to be examined, pondered, searched,  
 Probed, vexed, and criticised ?—Accuse me not  
 Of arrogance, unknown Wanderer as I am,  
 If, having walked with Nature threescore years, 980  
 And offered, far as frailty would allow,  
 My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,  
 I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,  
 Whom I have served, that their DIVINITY  
 Revolts, offended at the ways of men 985  
 Swayed by such motives, to such ends employed;  
 Philosophers, who, though the human soul  
 Be of a thousand faculties composed,  
 And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize  
 This soul, and the transcendent universe, 990  
 No more than as a mirror that reflects  
 To proud Self-love her own intelligence;  
 That one, poor, finite object, in the abyss  
 Of infinite Being, twinkling restlessly!

“Nor higher place can be assigned to him 995  
 And his compeers—the laughing Sage of France.—  
 Crowned was he, if my memory do not err,  
 With laurel planted upon hoary hairs,  
 In sign of conquest by his wit achieved  
 And benefits his wisdom had conferred; 1000  
 His stooping body tottered with wreaths of flowers

983-8 I do pronounce them such. A worthier name  
 Can they deserve who, while the human soul  
 Is of a thousand *etc.* MS. 58

986 ends 1837: end 1814-32 987-8 though . . . Be 1827: when  
 . . . Is 1814-20

989-90 . . . prize the frame  
 Of nature, this transcendent universe MS. 58

994 Of Mind and Being MS. 58

995-6 Nor higher title would I yield to him

And his compeers—the shrewd, the laughing Sage MS. 58

997 do 1827: doth MS., 1814-20

1001 *so* 1840: His tottering Body was oppressed with flowers; MS., 1814-20 . . . was with wreaths of flowers Opprest *as text* 1827-37

Opprest, far less becoming ornaments  
 Than Spring oft twines about a mouldering tree;  
 Yet so it pleased a fond, a vain, old Man,  
 And a most frivolous people. Him I mean 1005  
 Who penned, to ridicule confiding faith,  
 This sorry Legend; which by chance we found  
 Piled in a nook, through malice, as might seem,  
 Among more innocent rubbish."—Speaking thus,  
 With a brief notice when, and how, and where, 1010  
 We had espied the book, he drew it forth;  
 And courteously, as if the act removed,  
 At once, all traces from the good Man's heart  
 Of unbenign aversion or contempt,  
 Restored it to its owner. "Gentle Friend," 1015  
 Herewith he grasped the Solitary's hand,  
 "You have known lights and guides better than these.  
 Ah! let not aught amiss within dispose  
 A noble mind to practise on herself,  
 And tempt opinion to support the wrongs 1020  
 Of passion: whatsoe'er be felt or feared,  
 From higher judgment-seats make no appeal  
 To lower: can you question that the soul  
 Inherits an allegiance, not by choice  
 To be cast off, upon an oath proposed 1025  
 By each new upstart notion? In the ports  
 Of levity no refuge can be found,  
 No shelter, for a spirit in distress.

1002-3 so 1827: Far less becoming ornaments than those

With which Spring often decks a mouldering Tree! 1814-20

so MS., but withered for mouldering

1006 penned 1827: framed MS., 1814-20 1017 so 1845: You have  
 known better Lights and Guides than these MS., 1814-43

1019-23 A noble mind to traffic with itself

To invest authority and make appeal  
 From high to lower judgment-seats; whate'er  
 Looking before or after you perceive,  
 Tempt not opinion to promote the work  
 Of passion and engage a faithless will  
 In services which conscience disapproves  
 Or shrinks from. Can you etc. MS. 58

1021 be 1827: is 1814-20

1028/9 Laugh, but sincerely, with mirth's genuine spirit,  
 Meet scorn with scorn, but seek for truth elsewhere. MS. 58

He, who by wilful disesteem of life  
 And proud insensibility to hope, 1030  
 Affronts the eye of Solitude, shall learn  
 That her mild nature can be terrible;  
 That neither she nor Silence lack the power  
 To avenge their own insulted majesty.

“O blest seclusion! when the mind admits 1035  
 The law of duty; and can therefore move  
 Through each vicissitude of loss and gain,  
 Linked in entire complacency with her choice;  
 When youth’s presumptuousness is mellowed down,  
 And manhood’s vain anxiety dismissed; 1040  
 When wisdom shows her seasonable fruit,  
 Upon the boughs of sheltering leisure hung  
 In sober plenty; when the spirit stoops  
 To drink with gratitude the crystal stream  
 Of unreprieved enjoyment; and is pleased 1045  
 To muse, and be saluted by the air  
 Of meek repentance, wafting wall-flower scents  
 From out the crumbling ruins of fallen pride  
 And chambers of transgression, now forlorn.  
 O, calm contented days, and peaceful nights! 1050  
 Who, when such good can be obtained, would strive  
 To reconcile his manhood to a couch  
 Soft, as may seem, but, under that disguise,  
 Stuffed with the thorny substance of the past  
 For fixed annoyance; and full oft beset 1055  
 With floating dreams, black and disconsolate,  
 The vapoury phantoms of futurity?

“Within the soul a faculty abides,  
 That with interpositions, which would hide  
 And darken, so can deal that they become 1060  
 Contingencies of pomp; and serve to exalt  
 Her native brightness. As the ample moon,  
 In the deep stillness of a summer even  
 Rising behind a thick and lofty grove,

1036 so 1827: and thereby can live, MS., 1814–20 1048 crumbling]  
 mouldered MS. 58 1056 so 1837: disconsolate and black MS.,  
 1814–32

1062 Her native brightness. As to the eye of him  
 Who pauses on his way, the ample moon MS. 58

Burns, like an unconsuming fire of light, 1065  
 In the green trees ; and, kindling on all sides  
 Their leafy umbrage, turns the dusky veil  
 Into a substance glorious as her own,  
 Yea, with her own incorporated, by power  
 Capacious and serene. Like power abides 1070  
 In man's celestial spirit ; virtue thus  
 Sets forth and magnifies herself ; thus feeds  
 A calm, a beautiful, and silent fire,  
 From the encumbrances of mortal life,  
 From error, disappointment—nay, from guilt ; 1075  
 And sometimes, so relenting justice wills,  
 From palpable oppressions of despair.”

The Solitary by these words was touched  
 With manifest emotion, and exclaimed ;  
 “But how begin ? and whence ?—‘The Mind is free— 1080  
 Resolve,’ the haughty Moralist would say,  
 ‘This single act is all that we demand.’  
 Alas ! such wisdom bids a creature fly  
 Whose very sorrow is, that time hath shorn  
 His natural wings !—To friendship let him turn 1085  
 For succour ; but perhaps he sits alone  
 On stormy waters, tossed in a little boat  
 That holds but him, and can contain no more !  
 Religion tells of amity sublime  
 Which no condition can preclude ; of One 1090  
 Who sees all suffering, comprehends all wants,  
 All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs :  
 But is that bounty absolute ?—His gifts,  
 Are they not, still, in some degree, rewards  
 For acts of service ? Can his love extend 1095

1069–72 Yea, with its own embodied by a power  
 Capacious and serene. Like influence dwells  
 In Man's immortal spirit, to pervade  
 And to subdue, incorporate and absorb.  
 Desert and virtue cannot even exist  
 But in the neighbourhood and by the touch  
 Of evil which they overcome, and feed MS. 58

1087 stormy] the wild MS.: tossed added 1837

1088 him] one MS.

1095 For service done. [As a Friend ?] who doth need  
 Reciprocal observance, will he own  
 The heart that owns not him MS. 58

To hearts that own not him ? Will showers of grace,  
 When in the sky no promise may be seen,  
 Fall to refresh a parched and withered land ?  
 Or shall the groaning Spirit cast her load  
 At the Redeemer's feet ?"

In rueful tone, 1100

With some impatience in his mien, he spake:  
 Back to my mind rushed all that had been urged  
 To calm the Sufferer when his story closed ;  
 I looked for counsel as unbending now ;  
 But a discriminating sympathy 1105  
 Stooped to this apt reply:—

"As men from men

Do, in the constitution of their souls,  
 Differ, by mystery not to be explained ;  
 And as we fall by various ways, and sink  
 One deeper than another, self-condemned 1110  
 Through manifold degrees of guilt and shame ;  
 So manifold and various are the ways  
 Of restoration, fashioned to the steps  
 Of all infirmity, and tending all  
 To the same point, attainable by all— 1115  
 Peace in ourselves, and union with our God.  
 For you, assuredly, a hopeful road  
 Lies open: we have heard from you a voice  
 At every moment softened in its course  
 By tenderness of heart ; have seen your eye, 1120  
 Even like an altar lit by fire from heaven,  
 Kindle before us.—Your discourse this day,  
 That, like the fabled Lethe, wished to flow  
 In creeping sadness, through oblivious shades  
 Of death and night, has caught at every turn 1125  
 The colours of the sun. Access for you  
 Is yet preserved to principles of truth,  
 Which the imaginative Will upholds  
 In seats of wisdom, not to be approached

1100-6 In rueful . . . reply *so* 1827; *not in MS.*

In rueful tones,

With some impatience in his mien, he spake ;

And this reply was given.—"As Men . . . 1814-20

1109 And as we fall from right by various ways MS. 1117 *so* 1827:  
 For Him, to whom I speak, an easy road MS., 1814-20 1129 In  
 seats of power that cannot MS.

By the inferior Faculty that moulds,                      1130  
 With her minute and speculative pains,  
 Opinion, ever changing!

I have seen

A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell;                      1135  
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
 Listened intensely; and his countenance soon  
 Brightened with joy; for from within were heard  
 Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed  
 Mysterious union with its native sea.                      1140  
 Even such a shell the universe itself  
 Is to the ear of Faith; and there are times,  
 I doubt not, when to you it doth impart  
 Authentic tidings of invisible things;  
 Of ebb and flow, and ever-during power;                      1145  
 And central peace, subsisting at the heart  
 Of endless agitation. Here you stand,  
 Adore, and worship, when you know it not;  
 Pious beyond the intention of your thought;  
 Devout above the meaning of your will.                      1150  
 —Yes, you have felt, and may not cease to feel.  
 The estate of man would be indeed forlorn  
 If false conclusions of the reasoning power  
 Made the eye blind, and closed the passages  
 Through which the ear converses with the heart.                      1155  
 Has not the soul, the being of your life,  
 Received a shock of awful consciousness,  
 In some calm season, when these lofty rocks  
 At night's approach bring down the unclouded sky,  
 To rest upon their circumambient walls;                      1160  
 A temple framing of dimensions vast,

1135 smooth-lipped] purple MS. 58

1138-9 so 1845: . . . for murmurings from within

Were heard, sonorous cadences! whereby,  
 To his belief the Monitor *etc.* MS. 58, 1814-43 (*but* MS.  
 by which *for* whereby)

Murmurs by which as they would rise or fall  
 The monitor to his belief expressed C<sup>1</sup>  
 Sonorous intonations, rising or falling

Were heard by which the monitor expressed C<sup>4</sup>

1158 Mild yet deep searching, when MS.                      1159 unclouded] cloud-  
 less MS.                      1161 In peace a Temple framing vast and huge MS.

And yet not too enormous for the sound  
 Of human anthems,—choral song, or burst  
 Sublime of instrumental harmony,  
 To glorify the Eternal! What if these 1165  
 Did never break the stillness that prevails  
 Here,—if the solemn nightingale be mute,  
 And the soft woodlark here did never chant  
 Her vespers,—Nature fails not to provide  
 Impulse and utterance. The whispering air 1170  
 Sends inspiration from the shadowy heights,  
 And blind recesses of the caverned rocks;  
 The little rills, and waters numberless,  
 Inaudible by daylight, blend their notes  
 With the loud streams: and often, at the hour 1175  
 When issue forth the first pale stars, is heard,  
 Within the circuit of this fabric huge,  
 One voice—the solitary raven, flying  
 Athwart the concave of the dark blue dome,  
 Unseen, perchance above all power of sight— 1180  
 An iron knell! with echoes from afar  
 Faint—and still fainter—as the cry, with which  
 The wanderer accompanies her flight  
 Through the calm region, fades upon the ear,  
 Diminishing by distance till it seemed 1185

1162 enormous] gigantic MS.

1166–76 Be wanting, Nature fails not to provide  
     Impulse and utterance, to the solemn scene  
     And to the holy passions of the soul  
     Accordant, chiefly then, when at such hour  
     Of stillness, dimness, and repose, is heard MS.

1166–8 Be wanting, if the nightingale be mute  
     And the soft woodlark never chanted here MS.

1170 whispering] passing MS. 1171 Murmurs devoutly MS.

1175–6 . . . streams; and oftentimes is heard MS. 1180 all 1827:  
the 1814–20

1180–3 Unseen, and high above all power of sight  
     The Raven's voice, an iron knell renewed  
     At intervals with echoes from afar  
     Fainter and fainter echoes as the cry  
     With which the bird accompanies his flight MS.

1185 By distance and yet dies not. All is still  
     Save those celestial lamps the living stars  
     That twinkle in their stations self-disturbed.  
   All is still  
 Earth, air, and water are at peace, no form

To expire ; yet from the abyss is caught again,  
And yet again recovered !

But descending  
From these imaginative heights, that yield  
Far-stretching views into eternity,  
Acknowledge that to Nature's humbler power 1190  
Your cherished sullenness is forced to bend  
Even here, where her amenities are sown  
With sparing hand. Then trust yourself abroad  
To range her blooming bowers, and spacious fields,  
Where on the labours of the happy throng 1195  
She smiles, including in her wide embrace  
City, and town, and tower,—and sea with ships  
Sprinkled ;—be our Companion while we track  
Her rivers populous with gliding life ;  
While, free as air, o'er printless sands we march, 1200  
Or pierce the gloom of her majestic woods ;  
Roaming, or resting under grateful shade  
In peace and meditative cheerfulness ;  
Where living things, and things inanimate,

Memorial, intimation, vestige, thought

Or image (breathing) of disquietude appears

Save in the blue unfathomable sky

Whence those celestial *etc.* Are twinkling *etc. as above* MS. (*alt. version*)  
1190–207 By long experience taught (With earnest heart once more) I  
recommend

Those humbler sympathies with things that hold  
An inarticulate language . . . *corr. to*

I recommend

As a support for cheerfulness and ease

For hearts if not too heavily oppressed

Those softer renovations that proceed

From general Nature's mild appearances,

Those humbler sympathies with living things

Or things inanimate that from morn to eve

Do speak to eye and ear in every grove *corr. to*

I recommend

As a resource for indolence and ease

A charm for care, an opportune relief

For hearts *etc.*

An intercourse habitually maintained

With general *etc.*

And humble *etc.* . . . grove.

And speak to social Reason's inner sense MS.

1201 Or 1827: And 1814–20

1204–97 *v. note p. 430 infra*

Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye and ear, 1205  
 And speak to social reason's inner sense,  
 With inarticulate language.

For, the Man—

Who, in this spirit, communes with the Forms  
 Of nature, who with understanding heart  
 Both knows and loves such objects as excite 1210  
 No morbid passions, no disquietude,  
 No vengeance, and no hatred—needs must feel  
 The joy of that pure principle of love  
 So deeply, that, unsatisfied with aught  
 Less pure and exquisite, he cannot choose 1215  
 But seek for objects of a kindred love  
 In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.  
 Accordingly he by degrees perceives  
 His feelings of aversion softened down ;  
 A holy tenderness pervade his frame. 1220  
 His sanity of reason not impaired,  
 Say rather, all his thoughts now flowing clear,  
 From a clear fountain flowing, he looks round  
 And seeks for good ; and finds the good he seeks :  
 Until abhorrence and contempt are things 1225  
 He only knows by name ; and, if he hear,  
 From other mouths, the language which they speak,  
 He is compassionate ; and has no thought,  
 No feeling, which can overcome his love.

“And further ; by contemplating these Forms 1230  
 In the relations which they bear to man,  
 He shall discern, how, through the various means  
 Which silently they yield, are multiplied  
 The spiritual presences of absent things.  
 Trust me, that for the instructed, time will come 1235  
 When they shall meet no object but may teach  
 Some acceptable lesson to their minds  
 Of human suffering, or of human joy.  
 So shall they learn, while all things speak of man,

1207 An universal language MS. 1207-97 *For early draft of these lines v. Addendum B to “The Ruined Cottage”, ll. 1-110, p. 400 infra, and notes pp. 431-2* 1210 so 1837: Doth know and love 1814-20

1234/5 Convoked by knowledge ; and for his delight

Still ready to obey the gentle call 1814-20

1239-40 so 1827: For them shall all things speak of Man, they read  
 Their duties in all forms ; 1814-20

Their duties from all forms ; and general laws, 1240  
 And local accidents, shall tend alike  
 To rouse, to urge ; and, with the will, confer  
 The ability to spread the blessings wide  
 Of true philanthropy. The light of love  
 Not failing, perseverance from their steps 1245  
 Departing not, for them shall be confirmed  
 The glorious habit by which sense is made  
 Subservient still to moral purposes,  
 Auxiliari to divine. That change shall clothe  
 The naked spirit, ceasing to deplore 1250  
 The burthen of existence. Science then  
 Shall be a precious visitant ; and then,  
 And only then, be worthy of her name :  
 For then her heart shall kindle ; her dull eye,  
 Dull and inanimate, no more shall hang 1255  
 Chained to its object in brute slavery ;  
 But taught with patient interest to watch  
 The processes of things, and serve the cause  
 Of order and distinctness, not for this  
 Shall it forget that its most noble use, 1260  
 Its most illustrious province, must be found  
 In furnishing clear guidance, a support  
 Not treacherous, to the mind's *excursive* power.  
 —So build we up the Being that we are ;  
 Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of things, 1265  
 We shall be wise perforce ; and, while inspired  
 By choice, and conscious that the Will is free,  
 Shall move unswerving, even as if impelled  
 By strict necessity, along the path  
 Of order and of good. Whate'er we see, 1270  
 Or feel, shall tend to quicken and refine

1246 *so* 1827: . . . they shall at length obtain 1814–20 1268 *so*  
 1837: Unswerving shall we move, as if impelled 1814–32  
 1270–4 *so* C and Q MS.: *so* 1845, *but omitting* The humblest functions of  
 corporeal sense:

. . . Whate'er we see,  
 Whate'er we feel, by agency direct  
 Or indirect shall tend to feed and nurse  
 Our faculties, shall fix in calmer seats  
 Of moral strength, and raise to loftier heights  
 Of love divine, our intellectual Soul. 1814–43; *but* 1837–43

*transpose* by . . . indirect *and* shall . . . nurse

The humblest functions of corporeal sense ;  
 Shall fix, in calmer seats of moral strength,  
 Earthly desires ; and raise, to loftier heights  
 Of divine love, our intellectual soul." 1275

Here closed the Sage that eloquent harangue,  
 Poured forth with fervour in continuous stream,  
 Such as, remote, 'mid savage wilderness,  
 An Indian Chief discharges from his breast  
 Into the hearing of assembled tribes, 1280  
 In open circle seated round, and hushed  
 As the unbreathing air, when not a leaf  
 Stirs in the mighty woods.—So did he speak :  
 The words he uttered shall not pass away  
 Dispersed, like music that the wind takes up 1285  
 By snatches, and lets fall, to be forgotten ;  
 No—they sank into me, the bounteous gift  
 Of one whom time and nature had made wise,  
 Gracing his doctrine with authority  
 Which hostile spirits silently allow ; 1290  
 Of one accustomed to desires that feed  
 On fruitage gathered from the tree of life ;  
 To hopes on knowledge and experience built ;  
 Of one in whom persuasion and belief  
 Had ripened into faith, and faith become 1295  
 A passionate intuition ; whence the Soul,  
 Though bound to earth by ties of pity and love,  
 From all injurious servitude was free.

The Sun, before his place of rest were reached,  
 Had yet to travel far, but unto us, 1300  
 To us who stood low in that hollow dell,  
 He had become invisible,—a pomp  
 Leaving behind of yellow radiance spread  
 Over the mountain-sides, in contrast bold  
 With ample shadows, seemingly, no less 1305

1278–89 Like a grave Elder among Indian tribes

Whom Time and lonely Nature have made wise,  
 Gracing *etc.* MS.

1280 assembled 1827: the assembled 1814–20 1285–6 added 1837  
 1287 No— 1837: For 1814–32 1289 doctrine 1837: language  
 MS., 1814–32 1304 Over 1837: Upon 1814–32

Than those resplendent lights, his rich bequest ;  
 A dispensation of his evening power.  
 —Adown the path that from the glen had led  
 The funeral train, the Shepherd and his Mate  
 Were seen descending:—forth to greet them ran 1310  
 Our little Page: the rustic pair approach ;  
 And in the Matron's countenance may be read  
 Plain indication that the words, which told  
 How that neglected Pensioner was sent  
 Before his time into a quiet grave, 1315  
 Had done to her humanity no wrong:  
 But we are kindly welcomed—promptly served  
 With ostentatious zeal.—Along the floor  
 Of the small Cottage in the lonely Dell  
 A grateful couch was spread for our repose ; 1320  
 Where, in the guise of mountaineers, we lay,  
 Stretched upon fragrant heath, and lulled by sound  
 Of far-off torrents charming the still night,  
 And, to tired limbs and over-busy thoughts,  
 Inviting sleep and soft forgetfulness. 1325

1308 that 1827: which 1814-20 1310 to greet them 1827: in  
 transport 1814-20 1312 countenance 1845: aspect 1814-43  
 1313 so 1845: A plain assurance 1814-43 1321 lay 1845: slept  
 1814-43

1325 Inviting ease and quietness [profound ?]  
 Till every thought as gently as a flower,  
 That shuts its eyes at fall of evening dew,  
 Had folded up itself in dreamless sleep C

# BOOK FIFTH

## THE PASTOR

### ARGUMENT

Farewell to the Valley.—Reflections.—A large and populous Vale described.<sup>1</sup>—The Pastor's Dwelling, and some account of him.—Church<sup>2</sup> and Monuments.—The Solitary musing, and where.—Roused.—In the Churchyard the Solitary communicates the thoughts which had recently passed through his mind.—Lofty tone of the Wanderer's discourse of yesterday adverted to.—Rite of Baptism, and the professions accompanying it, contrasted with the real state of human life.—Apology for the Rite.<sup>3</sup>—Inconsistency of the best men.—Acknowledgment that practice falls far below the injunctions of duty as existing in the mind.—General complaint of a falling-off in the value of life after the time of youth.—Outward appearances of content and happiness in degree illusive.—Pastor approaches.—Appeal made to him.—His answer.—Wanderer in sympathy with him.—Suggestion that the least ambitious enquirers may be most free from error.—The Pastor is desired to give some portraits of the living or dead from his own observation of life among these Mountains—and for what purpose.—Pastor consents.—Mountain cottage.—Excellent qualities of its Inhabitants.—Solitary expresses his pleasure; but denies the praise of virtue to worth of this kind.—Feelings of the Priest before he enters upon his account of persons interred in the Churchyard.—Graves of unbaptized Infants.<sup>4</sup>—Funeral and sepulchral observances, whence.—Ecclesiastical Establishments, whence derived.—Profession of belief in the doctrine of Immortality.

“FAREWELL, deep Valley, with thy one rude House,  
 And its small lot of life-supporting fields,  
 And guardian rocks!—Farewell, attractive seat!  
 To the still influx of the morning light  
 Open, and day's pure cheerfulness, but veiled 5  
 From human observation, as if yet  
 Primeval forests wrapped thee round with dark  
 Impenetrable shade; once more farewell,  
 Majestic circuit, beautiful abyss,  
 By Nature destined from the birth of things 10  
 For quietness profound!”

Upon the side

<sup>1</sup> so 1837: Sight of a large and populous Vale—Solitary consents to go forward—Vale described 1814–32      <sup>2</sup> so 1837: The Churchyard—Church 1814–32      <sup>3</sup> Apology for the Rite added 1837      <sup>4</sup> so 1837: Infants—What sensations they excite— 1814–32

1 one rude] lonesome MS.      2 supporting] sustaining MS.  
 3 so 1827: And guardian rocks!—With unreverted eyes  
 I cannot pass thy bounds, attractive Seat! 1814–20  
 4–9 not in MS.

Of that brown ridge, sole outlet of the vale  
 Which foot of holdest stranger would attempt,  
 Lingering behind my comrades, thus I breathed  
 A parting tribute to a spot that seemed 15  
 Like the fixed centre of a troubled world.  
 Again I halted with reverted eyes;  
 The chain that would not slacken, was at length  
 Snapt,—and, pursuing leisurely my way,  
 How vain, thought I, is it by change of place 20  
 To seek that comfort which the mind denies;  
 Yet trial and temptation oft are shunned  
 Wisely; and by such tenure do we hold  
 Frail life's possessions, that even they whose fate  
 Yields no peculiar reason of complaint 25  
 Might, by the promise that is here, be won  
 To steal from active duties, and embrace  
 Obscurity, and undisturbed repose.

12 *so* 1837: The sole commodious outlet MS.: Of that green Slope, the  
 outlet 1814–20: brown Slope 1827–32 14/15 In a hushed voice, and  
 with reverted eyes MS.

16 *After this line an early draft continues:*

Backward I looked and looked again with hope  
 To imprint a final Image on my mind  
 That should not fade. Even they methought whose life  
 Yields no peculiar reason for complaint  
 By this allurement might be led to quit  
 The road of active duty and embrace  
 Obscure delights and calm forgetfulness.  
 What impulse drove the Hermit to his cell  
 And what detained him there till life was spent  
 Fast anchored in the desert, not alone  
 Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse  
 Wrongs unredress'd or insults unavenged  
 And unavengeable . . . *as* III. 375–7  
 Love with despair (*cetera desunt*) MS. 58

17–19 *so* 1837: Thence the smooth bank ascending with slow step  
 And now, pursuing leisurely my way, MS.: 1814–32 *last*  
*line only*

23 tenure] 1827: tenor MS., 1814–20

24 they] some MS.

28 undisturbed repose 1845: calm forgetfulness MS., 1814–43

28/9 Once more I stopp'd to cast a backward look  
 On that profound recess; and while I gazed  
 From my full heart a livelier strain broke forth,  
 Transition such as animates the grove  
 In springtime, when a Bird, that for a while

—Knowledge, methinks, in these disordered times,  
 Should be allowed a privilege to have 30  
 Her anchorites, like piety of old ;  
 Men, who, from faction sacred, and unstained  
 By war, might, if so minded, turn aside  
 Uncensured, and subsist, a scattered few  
 Living to God and nature, and content 35  
 With that communion. Consecrated be  
 The spots where such abide ! But happier still  
 The Man, whom, furthermore, a hope attends  
 That meditation and research may guide  
 His privacy to principles and powers 40  
 Discovered or invented ; or set forth,  
 Through his acquaintance with the ways of truth,  
 In lucid order ; so that, when his course  
 Is run, some faithful eulogist may say,  
 He sought not praise, and praise did overlook 45  
 His unobtrusive merit ; but his life,  
 Sweet to himself, was exercised in good  
 That shall survive his name and memory.

Hath soothed himself with notes subdued and low  
 Into a lofty pitch mounts suddenly.  
 (On that recess : and like a Bird of Song  
 That from a low key passes suddenly  
 Thus with a livelier impulse I exclaimed)  
 O happy Britain ! heaven protected Isle !  
 From that immense Metropolis through all  
 Thy humbler cities, towns, and villages  
 To the bare rock upon thy sounding shores  
 And thy remotest Dwelling-places, blest !  
 Oh my beloved Country, favoured, blest  
 Above all Countries, enviably blest  
 When with thy neighbour, haughty France, compared ;  
 For justice rules thy wide domain—the voice  
 Of Liberty is heard throughout thy bounds.  
 Dells deep as this the Mountains of Auvergne  
 Include, and gay Burgundia's vine-clad Hills  
 Hold many a green and habitable nook  
 Of Beauty more luxuriant, nor less safe,  
 Perchance, from notice and intrusive feet,  
 But what avails allurement in a Land  
 Where none are free to chuse ? Whose Sons, if cross'd  
 By aught which they would fly from, may not flee ?  
 Predestined all to works of violence,  
 Born to be slaves and ripened for the sword. MS.

33/4 In age, in manhood, or in ardent youth MS.

34 Uncensured] Unthwarted MS.

Acknowledgments of gratitude sincere  
 Accompanied these musings; fervent thanks 50  
 For my own peaceful lot and happy choice;  
 A choice that from the passions of the world  
 Withdrew, and fixed me in a still retreat;  
 Sheltered, but not to social duties lost,  
 Secluded, but not buried; and with song 55  
 Cheering my days, and with industrious thought;  
 With the ever-welcome company of books;  
 With virtuous friendship's soul-sustaining aid,  
 And with the blessings of domestic love.

Thus occupied in mind I paced along, 60  
 Following the rugged road, by sledge or wheel  
 Worn in the moorland, till I overtook  
 My two Associates, in the morning sunshine  
 Halting together on a rocky knoll,  
 Whence the bare road descended rapidly 65  
 To the green meadows of another vale.

Here did our pensive Host put forth his hand  
 In sign of farewell. "Nay," the old Man said,  
 "The fragrant air its coolness still retains;  
 The herds and flocks are yet abroad to crop 70  
 The dewy grass; you cannot leave us now,  
 We must not part at this inviting hour."  
 He yielded, though reluctant; for his mind  
 Instinctively disposed him to retire  
 To his own covert; as a billow, heaved 75  
 Upon the beach, rolls back into the sea.  
 —So we descend: and winding round a rock  
 Attain a point that showed the valley—stretched

49–50 Nor would I, as a Patriot and a Man,

The harbour quit whose stillness had inspired

These farewell musings without fervent thanks MS.

57 the ever-welcome MS., 1814–20, 1837–50: ever-welcome 1827–32

58 With 1837: By MS., 1814–32 65 so 1845: From which the  
 road *etc.* MS., 1814–43

69–72 "The air its dewy freshness still retains,

Pleasant and cool; you must not leave us yet." MS.

72/3 To that [this MS.] injunction, earnestly expressed, MS., 1814–20

77–8 So we descend and at the bottom gain

A jutting crag, and winding round its base,

We reach *etc.* MS.

In length before us ; and, not distant far,  
 Upon a rising ground a grey church-tower, 80  
 Whose battlements were screened by tufted trees.  
 And towards a crystal Mere, that lay beyond  
 Among steep hills and woods embosomed, flowed  
 A copious stream with boldly-winding course ;  
 Here traceable, there hidden—there again 85  
 To sight restored, and glittering in the sun.  
 On the stream's bank, and everywhere, appeared  
 Fair dwellings, single, or in social knots ;  
 Some scattered o'er the level, others perched  
 On the hill-sides, a cheerful quiet scene, 90  
 Now in its morning purity arrayed.

“As 'mid some happy valley of the Alps,”  
 Said I, “once happy, ere tyrannic power,  
 Wantonly breaking in upon the Swiss,  
 Destroyed their unoffending commonwealth, 95  
 A popular equality reigns here,  
 Save for yon stately House beneath whose roof  
 A rural lord might dwell.”—“No feudal pomp,  
 Or power,” replied the Wanderer, “to that House  
 Belongs, but there in his allotted Home 100  
 Abides, from year to year, a genuine Priest,  
 The shepherd of his flock ; or, as a king  
 Is styled, when most affectionately praised,  
 The father of his people. Such is he ;  
 And rich and poor, and young and old, rejoice 105  
 Under his spiritual sway. He hath vouchsafed  
 To me some portion of a kind regard ;  
 And something also of his inner mind

81 tufted] peaceful MS.

96-101 so 1845: A popular equality doth seem

Here to prevail ; and yet a House of State  
 Stands yonder, one beneath whose roof, methinks,  
 A rural Lord might dwell.” “No feudal pomp,”  
 Replied our Friend, a Chronicler who stood  
 Where'er he moved upon familiar ground,  
 Nor feudal power is there ; but there abides,  
 In his allotted Home, a genuine Priest, MS., 1814-20 ;

96-8, 1827-43, as text but one for yon 99-101 as MS.

106 so 1827: . . . sway, collected round him

In this sequestered Realm. He hath vouchsafed MS., 1814-20

107 so 1827: his kind MS., 1814-20

Hath he imparted—but I speak of him  
As he is known to all.

The calm delights 110

Of unambitious piety he chose,  
And learning's solid dignity; though born  
Of knightly race, nor wanting powerful friends.  
Hither, in prime of manhood, he withdrew  
From academic bowers. He loved the spot— 115  
Who does not love his native soil?—he prized  
The ancient rural character, composed  
Of simple manners, feelings unsuppress'd  
And undisguised, and strong and serious thought;  
A character reflected in himself, 120  
With such embellishment as well becoms  
His rank and sacred function. This deep vale  
Winds far in reaches hidden from our sight,  
And one a turreted manorial hall  
Adorns, in which the good Man's ancestors 125  
Have dwelt through ages—Patrons of this Cure.  
To them, and to his own judicious pains,  
The Vicar's dwelling, and the whole domain,  
Owes that presiding aspect which might well  
Attract your notice; statelier than could else 130  
Have been bestowed, through course of common chance,  
On an unwealthy mountain Benefice."

This said, oft pausing, we pursued our way;  
Nor reached the village-churchyard till the sun  
Travelling at steadier pace than ours, had risen 135  
Above the summits of the highest hills,  
And round our path darted oppressive beams.

110 calm delights] tranquil joys MS. 113/14 This good to reap,  
these pleasures to secure, MS., 1814-20 120 A character] And  
these are all MS.

123-7 so 1837: Is lengthened out by many a winding reach,  
Not visible to us; and one of these  
A turreted manorial Hall adorns;  
In which the good Man's Ancestors have dwelt  
From age to age, the Patrons of this Cure.  
To them, and to his decorating [and more to his adorning  
MS.] hand, MS., 1814-20; 1827-32 as text, but eyes for  
sight

131 in course MS., 1814-20 133 pausing 1837: halting MS., 1814-32

As chanced, the portals of the sacred Pile  
 Stood open ; and we entered. On my frame,  
 At such transition from the fervid air, 140  
 A grateful coolness fell, that seemed to strike  
 The heart, in concert with that temperate awe  
 And natural reverence which the place inspired.  
 Not raised in nice proportions was the pile,  
 But large and massy ; for duration built ; 145  
 With pillars crowded, and the roof upheld  
 By naked rafters intricately crossed,  
 Like leafless underboughs, in some thick wood,  
 All withered by the depth of shade above.  
 Admonitory texts inscribed the walls, 150  
 Each, in its ornamental scroll, enclosed ;  
 Each also crowned with wingèd heads—a pair  
 Of rudely-painted Cherubim. The floor  
 Of nave and aisle, in unpretending guise,  
 Was occupied by oaken benches ranged 155  
 In seemly rows ; the chancel only showed  
 Some vain distinctions, marks of earthly state  
 By immemorial privilege allowed ;  
 Though with the Encincture's special sanctity  
 But ill according. An heraldic shield, 160  
 Varying its tincture with the changeful light,  
 Imbued the altar-window ; fixed aloft  
 A faded hatchment hung, and one by time  
 Yet undiscoloured. A capacious pew  
 Of sculptured oak stood here, with drapery lined ; 165  
 And marble monuments were here displayed  
 Thronging the walls ; and on the floor beneath  
 Sepulchral stones appeared, with emblems graven

140 fervid] sunny MS.      142 concert] union MS.      144 raised in  
 1827: framed to MS., 1814-20      148 in... wood      1845: in ['mid 1827-  
 43] ... grove MS., 1814-43

157-64 so 1845: Some inoffensive marks of earthly state  
 And vain distinction. MS., 1814-43  
 Some vain distinctions, an heraldic shield,  
 In tincture varying as the sun might shine,  
 Imbued its eastern window, and aloft  
 A faded hatchment hung and one by time  
 Yet undiscolour'd, marks of earthly state C

167 Thronging 1827: Upon MS., 1814-20      168 Sepulchral] Sculp-  
 tural MS.

And foot-worn epitaphs, and some with small  
And shining effigies of brass inlaid. 170

The tribute by these various records claimed,  
Duly we paid, each after each, and read  
The ordinary chronicle of birth,  
Office, alliance, and promotion—all  
Ending in dust; of upright magistrates, 175  
Grave doctors strenuous for the mother-church,  
And uncorrupted senators, alike  
To king and people true. A brazen plate,  
Not easily deciphered, told of one  
Whose course of earthly honour was begun 180  
In quality of page among the train  
Of the eighth Henry, when he crossed the seas  
His royal state to show, and prove his strength  
In tournament, upon the fields of France.  
Another tablet registered the death, 185  
And praised the gallant bearing, of a Knight  
Tried in the sea-fights of the second Charles.  
Near this brave Knight his Father lay entombed;  
And, to the silent language giving voice,  
I read,—how in his manhood's earlier day 190  
He, 'mid the afflictions of intestine war  
And rightful government subverted, found  
One only solace—that he had espoused  
A virtuous Lady tenderly beloved  
For her benign perfections; and yet more 195  
Endeared to him, for this, that, in her state  
Of wedlock richly crowned with Heaven's regard,  
She with a numerous issue filled his house,  
Who throve, like plants, uninjured by the storm  
That laid their country waste. No need to speak 200  
Of less particular notices assigned  
To Youth or Maiden gone before their time,  
And Matrons and unwedded Sisters old;

169 On the smooth slab, and MS. 172 so 1845: Without reluctance  
did we pay; MS., 1814-43: We paid to each with due respect C 190  
manhood's] youth and MS.

193-4 This only solace—that a gentle Dame

He had espoused, a Lady most beloved MS.

195-8 so 1827: . . . and for this, That she with numerous etc. MS.; and for  
this Yet more endeared to him, that etc. as text 1814-20

Whose charity and goodness were rehearsed  
In modest panegyric.

“These dim lines, 205  
What would they tell ?” said I,—but, from the task  
Of puzzling out that faded narrative,  
With whisper soft my venerable Friend  
Called me ; and, looking down the darksome aisle,  
I saw the Tenant of the lonely vale 210  
Standing apart ; with curvèd arm reclined  
On the baptismal font ; his pallid face  
Upturned, as if his mind were rapt, or lost  
In some abstraction ;—gracefully he stood,  
The semblance bearing of a sculptured form 215  
That leans upon a monumental urn  
In peace, from morn to night, from year to year.

Him from that posture did the Sexton rouse ;  
Who entered, humming carelessly a tune,  
Continuation haply of the notes 220  
That had beguiled the work from which he came,  
With spade and mattock o’er his shoulder hung ;  
To be deposited, for future need,  
In their appointed place. The pale Recluse  
Withdrew ; and straight we followed,—to a spot 225  
Where sun and shade were intermixed ; for there  
A broad oak, stretching forth its leafy arms  
From an adjoining pasture, overhung  
Small space of that green churchyard with a light  
And pleasant awning. On the moss-grown wall 230  
My ancient Friend and I together took  
Our seats ; and thus the Solitary spake,  
Standing before us :—

“Did you note the mien  
Of that self-solaced, easy-hearted churl,  
Death’s hireling, who scoops out his neighbour’s grave, 235  
Or wraps an old acquaintance up in clay,

207 faded] broken C  
MS.

211 Our comrade, standing with his arm re-

215-16 Fixed without motion like a sculptured form

Leaning upon a monumental urn MS. 58

224 appointed] appropriate MS.

232/3 On the smooth platform of this churchyard ground MS.

235 hireling, who scoops out] minister who digs MS.

All unconcerned as he would bind a sheaf,  
 Or plant a tree. And did you hear his voice ?  
 I was abruptly summoned by the sound  
 From some affecting images and thoughts, 240  
 Which then were silent ; but crave utterance now.

“Much,” he continued, with dejected look,  
 “Much, yesterday, was said in glowing phrase  
 Of our sublime dependencies, and hopes  
 For future states of being ; and the wings 245  
 Of speculation, joyfully outspread,  
 Hovered above our destiny on earth :  
 But stoop, and place the prospect of the soul  
 In sober contrast with reality,  
 And man’s substantial life. If this mute earth 250  
 Of what it holds could speak, and every grave  
 Were as a volume, shut, yet capable  
 Of yielding its contents to eye and ear,  
 We should recoil, stricken with sorrow and shame,  
 To see disclosed, by such dread proof, how ill 255  
 That which is done accords with what is known  
 To reason, and by conscience is enjoined ;  
 How idly, how perversely, life’s whole course,  
 To this conclusion, deviates from the line,  
 Or of the end stops short, proposed to all 260  
 At her aspiring outset.

Mark the babe  
 Not long accustomed to this breathing world ;  
 One that hath barely learned to shape a smile,  
 Though yet irrational of soul, to grasp  
 With tiny finger—to let fall a tear ; 265  
 And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,  
 To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might seem,  
 The outward functions of intelligent man ;  
 A grave proficient in amusive feats  
 Of puppetry, that from the lap declare 270

237–8 so 1837: As unconcerned as when he plants a tree ? MS., 1814–32  
 239 the sound 1837: his voice MS., 1814–32 241 And from the  
 company of serious words MS., 1814–43 242 added 1837  
 248–9 But what more differ than the human Soul,

The powers and prospects in the human Soul MS.  
 255–6 ill . . . accords with] far . . . falls short of MS. 261 her  
 1827: its MS., 1814–20 265 finger 1837: fingers MS., 1814–32

His expectations, and announce his claims  
 To that inheritance which millions rue  
 That they were ever born to! In due time  
 A day of solemn ceremonial comes;  
 When they, who for this Minor hold in trust 275  
 Rights that transcend the loftiest heritage  
 Of mere humanity, present their Charge,  
 For this occasion daintily adorned,  
 At the baptismal font. And when the pure  
 And consecrating element hath cleansed 280  
 The original stain, the child is there received  
 Into the second ark, Christ's church, with trust  
 That he, from wrath redeemed, therein shall float  
 Over the billows of this troublesome world  
 To the fair land of everlasting life. 285  
 Corrupt affections, covetous desires,  
 Are all renounced; high as the thought of man  
 Can carry virtue, virtue is professed;  
 A dedication made, a promise given  
 For due provision to control and guide, 290  
 And unremitting progress to ensure  
 In holiness and truth."

"You cannot blame,"

Here interposing fervently I said,  
 "Rites which attest that Man by nature lies  
 Bedded for good and evil in a gulf 295  
 Fearfully low; nor will your judgment scorn

273-4 . . . But the day

Of solemn ceremonial is announced MS.

275 Minor] Infant MS. 276 loftiest 1845: unblest MS., 1814-20:  
 humblest 1827-43

292-4 . . . truth. No brighter gleams,

Kindled at dawn among the leaden clouds  
 In summer's stillest hour, precede the Sun,  
 A yet invisible Traveller on his path  
 Behind the eastern hill, and yet how soon  
 The radiant prospect shall be brushed away  
 Or shatter'd; 'tis dependent on a breath;  
 Even while we gaze, a dimness or decay  
 Hath reach'd it. Deem not, Sir, that I condemn  
 The rites by which your ministry attests,  
 Echoing the assurance of the inmost heart,  
 That unregenerate Man by Nature lies MS.

296 . . . or that my judgment scorns MS.

Those services, whereby attempt is made  
 To lift the creature toward that eminence  
 On which, now fallen, erewhile in majesty  
 He stood ; or if not so, whose top serene 300  
 At least he feels 'tis given him to descry ;  
 Not without aspirations, evermore  
 Returning, and injunctions from within  
 Doubt to cast off and weariness ; in trust  
 That what the Soul perceives, if glory lost, 305  
 May be, through pains and persevering hope,  
 Recovered ; or, if hitherto unknown,  
 Lies within reach, and one day shall be gained."

"I blame them not," he calmly answered—"no ;  
 The outward ritual and established forms 310  
 With which communities of men invest  
 These inward feelings, and the aspiring vows  
 To which the lips give public utterance  
 Are both a natural process ; and by me  
 Shall pass uncensured ; though the issue prove, 315  
 Bringing from age to age its own reproach,  
 Incongruous, impotent, and blank.—But, oh !  
 If to be weak is to be wretched—miserable,  
 As the lost Angel by a human voice  
 Hath mournfully pronounced, then, in my mind, 320  
 Far better not to move at all than move  
 By impulse sent from such illusive power,—  
 That finds and cannot fasten down ; that grasps  
 And is rejoiced, and loses while it grasps ;  
 That tempts, emboldens—for a time sustains, 325  
 And then betrays ; accuses and inflicts  
 Remorseless punishment ; and so retreads  
 The inevitable circle : better far  
 Than this, to graze the herb in thoughtless peace,  
 By foresight, or remembrance, undisturbed ! 330

"Philosophy ! and thou more vaunted name  
 Religion ! with thy statelier retinue,

298 toward 1832: tow'rds 1814-20: tow'rd 1827 309-20 *not in*  
 MS. 321 Ah, *for* Far MS. 325 *so* 1837: doth a while sustain,  
 MS., 1814-32 330 By foresight undisturbed and vain regret. MS.  
 330/1 Yet if the upright form and countenance reared  
 Aloft, as if to the heavens it would present

Faith, Hope, and Charity—from the visible world  
 Choose for your emblems whatso'er ye find  
 Of safest guidance or of firmest trust— 335  
 The torch, the star, the anchor; nor except  
 The cross itself, at whose unconscious feet  
 The generations of mankind have knelt  
 Ruefully seized, and shedding bitter tears,  
 And through that conflict seeking rest—of you, 340  
 High-titled Powers, am I constrained to ask,  
 Here standing, with the unvoyageable sky  
 In faint reflection of infinitude  
 Stretched overhead, and at my pensive feet  
 A subterraneous magazine of bones, 345  
 In whose dark vaults my own shall soon be laid,  
 Where are your triumphs? your dominion where?  
 And in what age admitted and confirmed?  
 —Not for a happy land do I enquire,  
 Island or grove, that hides a blessed few 350  
 Who, with obedience willing and sincere,  
 To your serene authorities conform;  
 But whom, I ask, of individual Souls,  
 Have ye withdrawn from passion's crooked ways,  
 Inspired, and thoroughly fortified?—If the heart 355  
 Could be inspected to its inmost folds  
 By sight undazzled with the glare of praise,  
 Who shall be named—in the resplendent line  
 Of sages, martyrs, confessors—the man

A more magnificent impress than their own,  
 Forbid that discontent should stoop thus low,  
 Then welcome reason's least ambitious course,  
 And envied be without reproof their lot  
 - Who, to and fro, from morn to evening pace  
 The narrow avenue of daily toil  
 For daily bread. Praise to the sturdy plough  
 And patient spade, and shepherd's simple crook  
 Nor be the light mechanic tool ungraced  
 With honour, which encasing by its power  
 Through long companionship, the artist's hand,  
 With indurated substance like itself,  
 Cuts off that hand, with all its world of nerves,  
 From a too busy commerce with the heart. MS. (*cf. U. 599–610,*  
*infra*)

Whom the best might of faith, wherever fix'd, 360  
 For one day's little compass, has preserved  
 From painful and discreditable shocks  
 Of contradiction, from some vague desire  
 Culpably cherished, or corrupt relapse  
 To some unsanctioned fear?"

"If this be so, 365

And Man," said I, "be in his noblest shape  
 Thus pitiably infirm; then, he who made,  
 And who shall judge the creature, will forgive  
 —Yet, in its general tenor, your complaint  
 Is all too true; and surely not misplaced: 370  
 For, from this pregnant spot of ground, such thoughts  
 Rise to the notice of a serious mind  
 By natural exhalation. With the dead  
 In their repose, the living in their mirth,  
 Who can reflect, unmoved, upon the round 375  
 Of smooth and solemnized complacencies,  
 By which, on Christian lands, from age to age  
 Profession mocks performance? Earth is sick,  
 And Heaven is weary, of the hollow words  
 Which States and Kingdoms utter when they talk 380  
 Of truth and justice. Turn to private life  
 And social neighbourhood; look we to ourselves;  
 A light of duty shines on every day  
 For all; and yet how few are warmed or cheered!  
 How few who mingle with their fellow-men 385  
 And still remain self-governed, and apart,  
 Like this our honoured Friend; and thence acquire  
 Right to expect his vigorous decline,  
 That promises to the end a blest old age!"

"Yet," with a smile of triumph thus exclaimed 390

The Solitary, "in the life of man,

360 faith, wherever fix'd 1845: Conscience, Faith, and Hope MS.;  
 Conscience, Truth, and Hope 1814-43 361 For one day's little  
 space, suffice to ease MS. 363 vague] false MS. 364 Culpably]  
 Sinfully MS.

365 If this be so] Then hail once more

The inglorious implements of rustic toil *etc. as ll. 612-19, infra, but*  
*those for ye (612, 615), they for ye (616), baffling for ceaseless (617), Which*  
*they preclude in that contented race, Who to their etc. (618-19) MS.,*  
*which continues as ll. 87-149 of draft quoted in notes, pp. 434-6 378 per-*  
*formance?] performance. MS., 1814-50*

If to the poetry of common speech  
 Faith may be given, we see as in a glass  
 A true reflection of the circling year,  
 With all its seasons. Grant that Spring is there, 395  
 In spite of many a rough untoward blast,  
 Hopeful and promising with buds and flowers;  
 Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich day,  
 That *ought* to follow faithfully expressed?  
 And mellow Autumn, charged with bounteous fruit, 400  
 Where is she imaged? in what favoured clime  
 Her lavish pomp, and ripe magnificence?  
 —Yet, while the better part is missed, the worse  
 In man's autumnal season is set forth  
 With a resemblance not to be denied, 405  
 And that contents him; bowers that hear no more  
 The voice of gladness, less and less supply  
 Of outward sunshine and internal warmth;  
 And, with this change, sharp air and falling leaves,  
 Foretelling aged Winter's desolate sway. 410

"How gay the habitations that bedeck  
 This fertile valley! Not a house but seems  
 To give assurance of content within;  
 Embosomed happiness, and placid love;  
 As if the sunshine of the day were met 415  
 With answering brightness in the hearts of all  
 Who walk this favoured ground. But chance-regards,  
 And notice forced upon incurious ears;  
 These, if these only, acting in despite  
 Of the encomiums by my Friend pronounced 420  
 On humble life, forbid the judging mind  
 To trust the smiling aspect of this fair  
 And noiseless commonwealth. The simple race  
 Of mountaineers (by nature's self removed  
 From foul temptations, and by constant care 425  
 Of a good shepherd tended, as themselves  
 Do tend their flocks) partake man's general lot  
 With little mitigation. They escape,

410 so 1845: so 1840, but dreary for desolate: Foretelling total Winter,  
 blank and cold. MS., 1814-37: Prelude to coming Winter's desolate sway  
 C 411 bedeck 1827: adorn MS., 1814-20  
 427 partake 1827: These share MS., 1814-20

Perchance, the heavier woes of guilt; feel not  
 The tedium of fantastic idleness: 430  
 Yet life, as with the multitude, with them  
 Is fashioned like an ill-constructed tale;  
 That on the outset wastes its gay desires,  
 Its fair adventures, its enlivening hopes,  
 And pleasant interests—for the sequel leaving 435  
 Old things repeated with diminished grace;  
 And all the laboured novelties at best  
 Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power  
 Evince the want and weakness whence they spring."

While in this serious mood we held discourse, 440  
 The reverend Pastor toward the churchyard gate  
 Approached; and, with a mild respectful air  
 Of native cordiality, our Friend  
 Advanced to greet him. With a gracious mien  
 Was he received, and mutual joy prevailed. 445  
 Awhile they stood in conference, and I guess  
 That he, who now upon the mossy wall  
 Sate by my side, had vanished, if a wish  
 Could have transferred him to the flying clouds,  
 Or the least penetrable hiding-place 450  
 In his own valley's rocky guardianship.  
 —For me, I looked upon the pair, well pleased:  
 Nature had framed them both, and both were marked  
 By circumstance, with intermixture fine  
 Of contrast and resemblance. To an oak 455  
 Hardy and grand, a weather-beaten oak,

429 so 1837: Perchance, guilt's heavier woes; and do not feel MS., 1814-32

439/40 Here see, no less than in the wider world,  
 See for the gushing fount's continuous stream  
 The toiling engine's interrupted gifts,  
 Or joyless Cistern's hoard that fears the sun,  
 The sail that caught the help of every wind,  
 The sail abandoned for the creeping oar!  
 This barter, these exchanges manhood brings,  
 Proud of his charge, and thus we prove a scheme  
 Well rounded and compleat, a promise kept  
 A heighth attained, a noble growth matured. MS.

440 serious mood] pensive way MS. 441 toward 1832: tow'rd  
 1814-20: tow'rd 1827

449-51 so 1837: . . . to his lonely House

Within the circuit of those guardian rocks. MS., 1814-32  
 453 Like and unlike, by nature framed and marked MS.

Fresh in the strength and majesty of age,  
 One might be likened: flourishing appeared,  
 Though somewhat past the fulness of his prime,  
 The other—like a stately sycamore, 460  
 That spreads, in gentle pomp, its honied shade.

A general greeting was exchanged; and soon  
 The Pastor learned that his approach had given  
 A welcome interruption to discourse  
 Grave, and in truth too often sad.—“Is Man 465  
 A child of hope? Do generations press  
 On generations, without progress made?  
 Halts the individual, ere his hairs be grey,  
 Perforce? Are we a creature in whom good  
 Preponderates, or evil? Doth the will 470  
 Acknowledge reason’s law? A living power  
 Is virtue, or no better than a name,  
 Fleeting as health or beauty, and unsound?  
 So that the only substance which remains,  
 (For thus the tenor of complaint hath run) 475  
 Among so many shadows, are the pains  
 And penalties of miserable life,  
 Doomed to decay, and then expire in dust!  
 —Our cogitations this way have been drawn,  
 These are the points,” the Wanderer said, “on which 480  
 Our inquest turns.—Accord, good Sir! the light  
 Of your experience to dispel this gloom:  
 By your persuasive wisdom shall the heart  
 That frets, or languishes, be stilled and cheered.”

“Our nature,” said the Priest, in mild reply, 485  
 “Angels may weigh and fathom: they perceive,  
 With undistempered and unclouded spirit,  
 The object as it is; but, for ourselves,  
 That speculative height *we* may not reach.  
 The good and evil are our own; and we 490  
 Are that which we would contemplate from far.

461 gentle 1837 gentler MS., 1814–32: 465 too 1827: full MS.,  
 1814–20 480 Wanderer] Pedlar MS.

491/2 For since by passion only we can act  
 The Almighty Wisdom hath ordained that Man  
 In all the intimate concerns of life,  
 Its joys and pains, should see but as he feels,  
 Judging, yet never an indifferent judge. MS.

Knowledge, for us, is difficult to gain—  
 Is difficult to gain, and hard to keep—  
 As virtue's self; like virtue is beset  
 With snares; tried, tempted, subject to decay. 495  
 Love, admiration, fear, desire, and hate,  
 Blind were we without these: through these alone  
 Are capable to notice or discern  
 Or to record; we judge, but cannot be  
 Indifferent judges. 'Spite of proudest boast, 500  
 Reason, best reason, is to imperfect man  
 An effort only, and a noble aim;  
 A crown, an attribute of sovereign power,  
 Still to be courted—never to be won.  
 —Look forth, or each man dive into himself; 505  
 What sees he but a creature too perturbed;  
 That is transported to excess; that yearns,  
 Regrets, or trembles, wrongly, or too much;  
 Hopes rashly, in disgust as rash recoils;  
 Battens on spleen, or moulders in despair? 510  
 Thus comprehension fails, and truth is missed;  
 Thus darkness and delusion round our path  
 Spread, from disease, whose subtle injury lurks  
 Within the very faculty of sight.

“Yet for the general purposes of faith 515  
 In Providence, for solace and support,  
 We may not doubt that who can best subject  
 The will to reason's law, can strictliest live  
 And act in that obedience, he shall gain  
 The clearest apprehension of those truths, 520  
 Which unassisted reason's utmost power  
 Is too infirm to reach. But, waiving this,  
 And our regards confining within bounds  
 Of less exalted consciousness, through which  
 The very multitude are free to range, 525  
 We safely may affirm that human life  
 Is either fair and tempting, a soft scene  
 Grateful to sight, refreshing to the soul,

507 transported] exalted MS. 513 injury] spirit MS.

516/17 And for those hopes without whose blessed aid

Duty would be a burthen; for these ends MS.

521-2 which Reason cannot fathom. But waiving that MS.

528 By sight of which the Spirit is refreshed MS.

Or a forbidding tract of cheerless view ;  
 Even as the same is looked at, or approached. 530  
 Thus, when in changeful April fields are white  
 With new-fallen snow, if from the sullen north  
 Your walk conduct you hither, ere the sun  
 Hath gained his noontide height, this churchyard, filled  
 With mounds transversely lying side by side 535  
 From east to west, before you will appear  
 An unilluminated, blank, and dreary, plain,  
 With more than wintry cheerlessness and gloom  
 Saddening the heart. Go forward, and look back ;  
 Look, from the quarter whence the lord of light, 540  
 Of life, of love, and gladness doth dispense  
 His beams ; which, unexcluded in their fall,  
 Upon the southern side of every grave  
 Have gently exercised a melting power ;  
 Then will a vernal prospect greet your eye, 545  
 All fresh and beautiful, and green and bright,  
 Hopeful and cheerful :—vanished is the pall  
 That overspread and chilled the sacred turf,  
 Vanished or hidden ; and the whole domain,  
 To some, too lightly minded, might appear 550

529 forbidding MS., 1814, 1827-43: forbidden 1820, 1845, 1850

530/1 —The Priest continued—"I am tempted here

To use an illustration of my thought,

Drawn from the very spot on which we stand. MS.

"Permit me", said the Priest continuing, "here *etc. as* MS., 1814-20

531-5 *so* 1837: —In changeful April, when, as he is wont,

Winter has reassumed a short-lived sway

And whitened all the surface of the fields,

If—from the sullen region of the North

Towards the circuit of this holy ground

Your walk conducts you, ere the vigorous sun,

High climbing, hath attained his noon-tide height—

These Mounds," MS., 1814-20

In changeful April when with frost and snow

Winter, as he is wont, has re-assumed

A short-lived sway returning unawares *etc. as* 1814, MS.

*alt. version* ; 1827-32 *as text*, but 531-2 Thus, when in changeful April snow  
has fallen And fields are white ;

537 *so* 1827: A dreary plain of unilluminated snow MS., 1814-20

539/40 On the same circuit of this Church-yard ground MS., 1814-20

543-4 Have reach'd the turf-clad slope of every grave And gently MS.

547 pall 1837: snow MS., 1814-32 548 *added* 1837

A meadow carpet for the dancing hours.  
 —This contrast, not unsuitable to life,  
 Is to that other state more apposite,  
 Death and its two-fold aspect! wintry—one,  
 Cold, sullen, blank, from hope and joy shut out; 555  
 The other, which the ray divine hath touched,  
 Replete with vivid promise, bright as spring."

"We see, then, as we feel," the Wanderer thus  
 With a complacent animation spake,  
 "And in your judgment, Sir! the mind's repose 560  
 On evidence is not to be ensured  
 By act of naked reason. Moral truth  
 Is no mechanic structure, built by rule;  
 And which, once built, retains a stedfast shape  
 And undisturbed proportions; but a thing 565  
 Subject, you deem, to vital accidents;  
 And, like the water-lily, lives and thrives,  
 Whose root is fixed in stable earth, whose head  
 Floats on the tossing waves. With joy sincere  
 I re-salute these sentiments confirmed 570  
 By your authority. But how acquire  
 The inward principle that gives effect  
 To outward argument; the passive will  
 Meek to admit; the active energy,  
 Strong and unbounded to embrace, and firm 575  
 To keep and cherish? how shall man unite  
 With self-forgetting tenderness of heart  
 An earth-despising dignity of soul?  
 Wise in that union, and without it blind!"

"The way," said I, "to court, if not obtain 580  
 The ingenuous mind, apt to be set aright;  
 This, in the lonely dell discoursing, you  
 Declared at large; and by what exercise  
 From visible nature, or the inner self  
 Power may be trained, and renovation brought 585  
 To those who need the gift. But, after all,  
 Is aught so certain as that man is doomed

552 . . . which to life may be applied MS. 558 Wanderer] Pedlar  
 MS. 569 tossing] restless MS. 577-8 With . . . An 1827-50:  
 A . . . And MS., 1814-20 582-3 This, while we conversed in the  
 lonely dell, You shewed MS.

To breathe beneath a vault of ignorance ?  
 The natural roof of that dark house in which  
 His soul is pent! How little can be known— 590  
 This is the wise man's sigh ; how far we err—  
 This is the good man's not unfrequent pang!  
 And they perhaps err least, the lowly class  
 Whom a benign necessity compels  
 To follow reason's least ambitious course ; 595  
 Such do I mean who, unperplexed by doubt,  
 And unincited by a wish to look  
 Into high objects farther than they may,  
 Pace to and fro, from morn till eventide,  
 The narrow avenue of daily toil 600  
 For daily bread."

"Yes," buoyantly exclaimed  
 The pale Recluse—"praise to the sturdy plough,  
 And patient spade ; praise to the simple crook,  
 And ponderous loom—resounding while it holds  
 Body and mind in one captivity ; 605  
 And let the light mechanic tool be hailed  
 With honour ; which, encasing by the power  
 Of long companionship, the artist's hand,  
 Cuts off that hand, with all its world of nerves,  
 From a too busy commerce with the heart! 610  
 —Inglorious implements of craft and toil,  
 Both ye that shape and build, and ye that force,  
 By slow solicitation, earth to yield  
 Her annual bounty, sparingly dealt forth  
 With wise reluctance ; you would I extol, 615  
 Not for gross good alone which ye produce,  
 But for the impertinent and ceaseless strife  
 Of proofs and reasons ye preclude—in those  
 Who to your dull society are born,  
 And with their humble birthright rest content. 620  
 —Would I had ne'er renounced it!"

A slight flush

Of moral anger previously had tinged  
 The old Man's cheek ; but, at this closing turn  
 Of self-reproach, it passed away. Said he,

"That which we feel we utter ; as we think 625  
 So have we argued ; reaping for our pains  
 No visible recompense. For our relief  
 You," to the Pastor turning thus he spake,  
 "Have kindly interposed. May I entreat  
 Your further help ? The mine of real life 630  
 Dig for us ; and present us, in the shape  
 Of virgin ore, that gold which we, by pains  
 Fruitless as those of aery alchemists,  
 Seek from the torturing crucible. There lies  
 Around us a domain where you have long 635  
 Watched both the outward course and inner heart :  
 Give us, for our abstractions, solid facts ;  
 For our disputes, plain pictures. Say what man  
 He is who cultivates yon hanging field ;  
 What qualities of mind she bears, who comes, 640  
 For morn and evening service, with her pail,  
 To that green pasture ; place before our sight  
 The family who dwell within yon house  
 Fenced round with glittering laurel ; or in that  
 Below, from which the curling smoke ascends. 645  
 Or rather, as we stand on holy earth,  
 And have the dead around us, take from them  
 Your instances ; for they are both best known,  
 And by frail man most equitably judged.  
 Epitomise the life ; pronounce, you can, 650  
 Authentic epitaphs on some of these  
 Who, from their lowly mansions hither brought,  
 Beneath this turf lie mouldering at our feet :  
 So, by your records, may our doubts be solved ;  
 And so, not searching higher, we may learn 655  
*To prize the breath we share with human kind ;*  
*And look upon the dust of man with awe."*

The Priest replied—"An office you impose  
 For which peculiar requisites are mine ;  
 Yet much, I feel, is wanting—else the task 660  
 Would be most grateful. True indeed it is  
 That they whom death has hidden from our sight

635/6 Held spiritual sway, have guided and consoled, MS., 1814-20

636 And watched MS., 1814-20

644 Fenced round with] Em-

bowered in MS.

645 the peering shrubs ascend. MS.

656-7

MS., 1814-20 *no italics*

Are worthiest of the mind's regard ; with these  
 The future cannot contradict the past :  
 Mortality's last exercise and proof 665  
 Is undergone ; the transit made that shows  
 The very Soul, revealed as she departs.  
 Yet, on your first suggestion, will I give,  
 Ere we descend into these silent vaults,  
 One picture from the living.

You behold, 670

High on the breast of yon dark mountain, dark  
 With stony barrenness, a shining speck  
 Bright as a sunbeam sleeping till a shower  
 Brush it away, or cloud pass over it ;  
 And such it might be deemed—a sleeping sunbeam ; 675  
 But 'tis a plot of cultivated ground,  
 Cut off, an island in the dusky waste ;  
 And that attractive brightness is its own.  
 The lofty site, by nature framed to tempt  
 Amid a wilderness of rocks and stones 680  
 The tiller's hand, a hermit might have chosen,  
 For opportunity presented, thence  
 Far forth to send his wandering eye o'er land  
 And ocean, and look down upon the works,  
 The habitations, and the ways of men, 685  
 Himself unseen ! But no tradition tells  
 That ever hermit dipped his maple dish  
 In the sweet spring that lurks 'mid yon green fields ;  
 And no such visionary views belong  
 To those who occupy and till the ground, 690  
 High on that mountain where they long have dwelt  
 A wedded pair in childless solitude.  
 A house of stones collected on the spot,  
 By rude hands built, with rocky knolls in front,  
 Backed also by a ledge of rock, whose crest 695  
 Of birch-trees waves over the chimney-top ;

667 she 1827: it MS., 1814-20 677 dusky] barren MS. 679  
 site MS., 1814-45: sight [*sic*] 1850 691 *so* 1845: And on the bosom  
 of the mountain dwell MS., 1814-43

693-8 A hut of rough materials rudely built,  
 And in a vegetable garb disguised  
 Of fern self-planted on the roof and walls,  
 In shape, in size, in colour such a Hut  
 As in the unsettled time of Border war MS.

A rough abode—in colour, shape, and size,  
 Such as in unsafe times of border-war  
 Might have been wished for and contrived, to elude  
 The eye of roving plunderer—for their need 700  
 Suffices; and unshaken bears the assault  
 Of their most dreaded foe, the strong South-west  
 In anger blowing from the distant sea.  
 —Alone within her solitary hut;  
 There, or within the compass of her fields, 705  
 At any moment may the Dame be found,  
 True as the stock-dove to her shallow nest 5  
 And to the grove that holds it. She beguiles  
 By intermingled work of house and field  
 The summer's day, and winter's; with success 710  
 Not equal, but sufficient to maintain,  
 Even at the worst, a smooth stream of content,  
 Until the expected hour at which her Mate  
 From the far-distant quarry's vault returns;  
 And by his converse crowns a silent day 715  
 With evening cheerfulness. In powers of mind,  
 In scale of culture, few among my flock  
 Hold lower rank than this sequestered pair:  
 But true humility descends from heaven;  
 And that best gift of heaven hath fallen on them; 720  
 Abundant recompense for every want.  
 —Stoop from your height, ye proud, and copy these!  
 Who, in their noiseless dwelling-place, can hear  
 The voice of wisdom whispering scripture texts  
 For the mind's government, or temper's peace; 725  
 And recommending for their mutual need,  
 Forgiveness, patience, hope, and charity!"

"Much was I pleased," the grey-haired Wanderer said,  
 "When to those shining fields our notice first  
 You turned; and yet more pleased have from your lips 730  
 Gathered this fair report of them who dwell  
 In that retirement; whither, by such course  
 Of evil hap and good as oft awaits

697 so 1827: In shape, in size, and colour, an abode 1814-20 700  
 plunderer] traveller MS. 701 protects them from the assault MS.  
 719 true humility 1845: humbleness of heart MS., 1814-43 729  
 shining] lonely MS. 731 them 1827: those 1814-20

A tired way-faring man, once *I* was brought  
 While traversing alone yon mountain-pass. 735  
 Dark on my road the autumnal evening fell,  
 And night succeeded with unusual gloom,  
 So hazardous that feet and hands became  
 Guides better than mine eyes—until a light  
 High in the gloom appeared, too high, methought, 740  
 For human habitation; but I longed  
 To reach it, destitute of other hope.  
 I looked with steadiness as sailors look  
 On the north star, or watch-tower's distant lamp,  
 And saw the light—now fixed—and shifting now— 745  
 Not like a dancing meteor, but in line  
 Of never-varying motion, to and fro.  
 It is no night-fire of the naked hills,  
 Thought I—some friendly covert must be near.  
 With this persuasion thitherward my steps 750  
 I turn, and reach at last the guiding light;  
 Joy to myself! but to the heart of her  
 Who there was standing on the open hill,  
 (The same kind Matron whom your tongue hath praised)  
 Alarm and disappointment! The alarm 755  
 Ceased, when she learned through what mishap I came,  
 And by what help had gained those distant fields.

734 tired . . . once *I*] lone . . . I once MS.

734-6 so 1827: A lone way-faring Man, I once was brought.

Dark on my road the autumnal evening fell

While I was traversing yon mountain-pass MS., 1814-20

738 so 1845: So that my feet and hands at length became MS., 1814-43

749 Thought 1827: Said MS., 1814-20

751-4 I turned, and floundering over pathless wastes

Attained the object of that toil at last

Joy to myself but to a female's heart MS.

757-68 And to the spot how guided, words addressed

Even to the Matron whom your tongue has praised.

There was she standing on the open hill

Drawn from her neighbouring cottage by an act

Of anxious duty which the lofty Site

By nothing led to but a few faint paths

Imposes. With a lantern in her hand

Alone she stood, and paced, as she is wont,

By this unwearied signal kenned afar

To guide her husband home, if any chance

(Such chance is rare) detains him till the night

Falls dark upon the Hills. But come, she said,

Drawn from her cottage, on that æry height,  
 Bearing a lantern in her hand she stood,  
 Or paced the ground—to guide her Husband home, 760  
 By that unwearied signal, kenned afar;  
 An anxious duty! which the lofty site,  
 Traversed but by a few irregular paths,  
 Imposes, whensoever untoward chance  
 Detains him after his accustomed hour 765  
 Till night lies black upon the ground. 'But come,  
 Come,' said the Matron, 'to our poor abode;  
 Those dark rocks hide it!' Entering, I beheld  
 A blazing fire—beside a cleanly hearth  
 Sate down; and to her office, with leave asked, 770  
 The Dame returned.

Or ere that glowing pile  
 Of mountain turf required the builder's hand  
 Its wasted splendour to repair, the door  
 Opened, and she re-entered with glad looks,  
 Her Helpmate following. Hospitable fare, 775  
 Frank conversation, made the evening's treat:  
 Need a bewildered traveller wish for more?  
 But more was given; I studied as we sate  
 By the bright fire, the good Man's form, and face  
 Not less than beautiful; an open brow 780  
 Of undisturbed humanity; a cheek

Come let me lead you to our poor Abode.  
 Behind these rocks it stands, as if it shunned  
 In churlishness the eye of all mankind.  
 But the few guests who seek the door receive  
 Most hearty welcome—Entering I beheld MS.

758 æry 1837: open MS., 1814–32

763 so 1827: Far from all Public road or beaten way

And traversed only by a few faint paths 1814–20

765–8 so 1832: so 1827 but 766 When night . . . hills; 1814–20 as MS. but  
 black for dark 771 Or ere] Before MS. 777/8 Escaped from

darkness and uncertain toil MS.

778–85 so 1845: . . . the eye, the mind, the heart

Found exercise in noting, as we sate  
 By the bright fire, the good Man's face, composed  
 Of features elegant, the countenance mild,  
 A brow of undisturbed humanity;  
 And as the course of conversation changed,  
 Expression slowly varying MS.

778–80 1814–20 as MS. but from 780 an open brow as text: 1827–43 has 778  
 as text, 779–80 as 1814

Suffused with something of a feminine hue ;  
 Eyes beaming courtesy and mild regard ;  
 But, in the quicker turns of the discourse,  
 Expression slowly varying, that evinced 785  
 A tardy apprehension. From a fount  
 Lost, thought I, in the obscurities of time,  
 But honoured once, those features and that mien  
 May have descended, though I see them here.  
 In such a man, so gentle and subdued, 790  
 Withal so graceful in his gentleness,  
 A race illustrious for heroic deeds,  
 Humbled, but not degraded, may expire.  
 This pleasing fancy (cherished and upheld  
 By sundry recollections of such fall 795  
 From high to low, ascent from low to high,  
 As books record, and even the careless mind  
 Cannot but notice among men and things)  
 Went with me to the place of my repose.

"Roused by the crowing cock at dawn of day, 800  
 I yet had risen too late to interchange  
 A morning salutation with my Host,  
 Gone forth already to the far-off seat  
 Of his day's work. 'Three dark mid-winter months  
 Pass', said the Matron, 'and I never see, 805  
 Save when the sabbath brings its kind release,  
 My helpmate's face by light of day. He quits  
 His door in darkness, nor till dusk returns.  
 And, through Heaven's blessing, thus we gain the bread  
 For which we pray ; and for the wants provide 810  
 Of sickness, accident, and helpless age.  
 Companions have I many ; many friends,  
 Dependants, comforters—my wheel, my fire,

788 those 1837-50: these MS., 1814-32 788-90 and that mien . . .  
 In such] may descend In such MS. 794-5 . . . fancy that derived  
 support From sundry MS.

799 Sweetened for me our mutual goodnight  
 Nor left me on a lowly pallet stretch'd  
 Till slumber had given way to dreamless sleep C  
 799/800 Where every thought as gently as a flower  
 That shuts its eyes at fall of evening dew  
 Soon folded up itself in dreamless sleep C  
 809 Heaven's] God's C

All day the house-clock ticking in mine ear,  
 The cackling hen, the tender chicken brood, 815  
 And the wild birds that gather round my porch.  
 This honest sheep-dog's countenance I read ;  
 With him can talk ; nor blush to waste a word  
 On creatures less intelligent and shrewd.  
 And if the blustering wind that drives the clouds 820  
 Care not for me, he lingers round my door,  
 And makes me pastime when our tempers suit ;—  
 But, above all, my thoughts are my support,  
 My comfort:—would that they were oftener fixed  
 On what, for guidance in the way that leads 825  
 To heaven, I know, by my Redeemer taught.'

The Matron ended—nor could I forbear  
 To exclaim—'O happy! yielding to the law  
 Of these privations, richer in the main!—  
 While thankless thousands are oppress'd and clogged 830  
 By ease and leisure ; by the very wealth  
 And pride of opportunity made poor ;  
 While tens of thousands falter in their path,  
 And sink, through utter want of cheering light ;  
 For you the hours of labour do not flag ; 835  
 For you each evening hath its shining star,  
 And every sabbath-day its golden sun.' ”

“Yes!” said the Solitary with a smile  
 That seemed to break from an expanding heart,  
 “The untutored bird may found, and so construct, 840  
 And with such soft materials line, her nest  
 Fixed in the centre of a prickly brake,  
 That the thorns wound her not ; they only guard.  
 Powers not unjustly likened to those gifts  
 Of happy instinct which the woodland bird 845  
 Shares with her species, nature's grace sometimes  
 Upon the individual doth confer,  
 Among her higher creatures born and trained  
 To use of reason. And, I own that, tired

818 nor blush to 1827: and often MS.: nor seldom 1814-20

824-6 added 1845 830 clogged] cloyed MS. 840-1 The

little bird, by happy instinct taught, Can MS.

844-7 What on the species Nature doth confer

Is sometimes to the Individual given MS.

Of the ostentatious world—a swelling stage 850  
 With empty actions and vain passions stuffed,  
 And from the private struggles of mankind  
 Hoping far less than I could wish to hope,  
 Far less than once I trusted and believed—  
 I love to hear of those, who, not contending 855  
 Nor summoned to contend for virtue's prize,  
 Miss not the humbler good at which they aim,  
 Blest with a kindly faculty to blunt  
 The edge of adverse circumstance, and turn  
 Into their contraries the petty plagues 860  
 And hindrances with which they stand beset.  
 In early youth, among my native hills,  
 I knew a Scottish Peasant who possessed  
 A few small crofts of stone-encumbered ground ;  
 Masses of every shape and size, that lay 865  
 Scattered about under the mouldering walls  
 Of a rough precipice ; and some, apart,  
 In quarters unobnoxious to such chance,  
 As if the moon had showered them down in spite.  
 But he repined not. Though the plough was scared 870  
 By these obstructions, 'round the shady stones  
 A fertilising moisture,' said the Swain,  
 'Gathers, and is preserved ; and feeding dews  
 And damps, through all the drougthy summer day  
 From out their substance issuing, maintain 875  
 Herbage that never fails: no grass springs up  
 So green, so fresh, so plentiful, as mine!'  
 But thinly sown these natures ; rare, at least,  
 The mutual aptitude of seed and soil  
 That yields such kindly product. He, whose bed 880  
 Perhaps yon loose sods cover, the poor Pensioner  
 Brought yesterday from our sequestered dell  
 Here to lie down in lasting quiet, he,  
 If living now, could otherwise report  
 Of rustic loneliness: that grey-haired Orphan— 885

853 far 1837: for MS., 1814-32 861/2 Though this is rather  
 Nature's praise than theirs. MS. 866 under 1832: beneath MS.,  
 1814-27 872-3 Gather, said he, the dews ; and feeding dews MS.  
 877/8 See in this well-conditioned Soul, a Third  
 To match with your good Couple that put forth  
 Their homely graces on the Mountain side. MS., 1814-20

So call him, for humanity to him  
 No parent was—feelingly could have told,  
 In life, in death, what solitude can breed  
 Of selfishness, and cruelty, and vice;  
 Or, if it breed not, hath not power to cure. 890  
 —But your compliance, Sir! with our request  
 My words too long have hindered.”

Undeterred,

Perhaps incited rather, by these shocks,  
 In no ungracious opposition, given  
 To the confiding spirit of his own 895  
 Experienced faith, the reverend Pastor said,  
 Around him looking; “Where shall I begin?  
 Who shall be first selected from my flock  
 Gathered together in their peaceful fold?”  
 He paused—and having lifted up his eyes 900  
 To the pure heaven, he cast them down again  
 Upon the earth beneath his feet; and spake:—

“To a mysteriously-united pair  
 This place is consecrate; to Death and Life,  
 And to the best affections that proceed 905  
 From their conjunction; consecrate to faith  
 In him who bled for man upon the cross;  
 Hallowed to revelation; and no less  
 To reason’s mandates; and the hopes divine  
 Of pure imagination;—above all, 910  
 To charity, and love, that have provided,  
 Within these precincts, a capacious bed  
 And receptacle, open to the good

887 feelingly could 1832: could feelingly MS., 1814–27

898–9 Whose hallowed sleep shall such [? unusual] voice  
 Disturb, though speaking in parental tone.

Who shall be first selected . . . fold.

This said, the Reverend Pastor silent stood  
 In thoughtful hesitation, on the ground  
 Looking, upon the graves that nearest lay,  
 Then on the mounds that rose on either hand.

This noticing the Itinerant interposing said

I wonder not that meditative awe

Hath seized you doubting to uplift the scale  
 (To stand in judgment and uplift the scale)

And weigh albeit in a spiritual . . . *cetera desunt* MS.

903 united 1845: consorted MS., 1814–43

And evil, to the just and the unjust ;  
 In which they find an equal resting-place : 915  
 Even as the multitude of kindred brooks  
 And streams, whose murmur fills this hollow vale,  
 Whether their course be turbulent or smooth,  
 Their waters clear or sullied, all are lost  
 Within the bosom of yon crystal Lake, 920  
 And end their journey in the same repose!

“And blest are they who sleep ; and we that know,  
 While in a spot like this we breathe and walk,  
 That all beneath us by the wings are covered  
 Of motherly humanity, outspread 925  
 And gathering all within their tender shade,  
 Though loth and slow to come! A battlefield,  
 In stillness left when slaughter is no more,  
 With this compared, makes a strange spectacle!  
 A dismal prospect yields the wild shore strewn 930  
 With wrecks, and trod by feet of young and old  
 Wandering about in miserable search  
 Of friends or kindred, whom the angry sea  
 Restores not to their prayer! Ah! who would think

926 within] beneath MS. 929 makes 1845: is 1814-32: yields  
 1837-43

930-3 so 1837: A rueful sight the wild shore strewn with wrecks  
 And trod by people in afflicted quest  
 Of friends and kindred, MS., 1814-32

934-43 . . . The contrast yet  
 A little longer may our thoughts pursue.  
 Behold, and where ? where, but in polished realms  
 For arts and arms and luxury renowned,  
 That to our minds present this sight of truth ?  
 Mark him who shuts and opens his sad eyes  
 In some sepulchral dungeon's trickling vault,  
 Buried where scarcely he can note or feel  
 The several qualities of night and day,  
 To lull a Tyrant's fear or please his will,  
 And in the end and quietness of all  
 The bones remaining when the breath expired.  
 From this dire truth which polished Realms afford  
 Turn to the region of the East, and see  
 Where sandy desarts to the walls extend  
 Of some proud City, which the Turbaned chief  
 Rules with his scymitar—a fainting wretch ;  
 Yea more, a Company of either sex  
 Crawled forth and thankfully set down to take

That all the scattered subjects which compose 935  
Earth's melancholy vision through the space  
Of all her climes—these wretched, these depraved,  
To virtue lost, insensible of peace,  
From the delights of charity cut off,  
To pity dead, the oppressor and the opprest; 940  
Tyrants who utter the destroying word,  
And slaves who will consent to be destroyed—  
Were of one species with the sheltered few,  
Who, with a dutiful and tender hand,

The gaunt Hyena's leavings, they themselves  
Destined, perhaps, ere morning's light return  
To be the wild Beasts' prey. Behold, and this  
This, though a sight (effect) of keener wretchedness,  
Perhaps our bodily eyes have often seen,  
While the heart knew not what they looked upon,  
One out of many in our Christian land  
Who, hopeless of relief, and unrelieved  
(Retire like Birds to holes and corners chased  
By pitiless winter, Miserable Men)  
Is marching forward through the crowded street  
In some unheeded corner to lie down  
Making that place his home where he can die.  
Track where you may the course of those who bent  
On strange adventures, or desiring gain,  
Or urged by thirst of knowledge, wander on  
Restless, encountering with their own free choice  
All shapes of danger and unsolaced death,  
Wherever foot can go. Before your mind  
Place, if you can, a City to the flames  
Of war delivered, and the [ ?]  
Or to a field of battle turn once more,  
But ere the fight begin, and there behold  
A mighty number taught by pride of heart  
And martial discipline to stand or move  
Firm and compact as with one soul inspired,  
Till irresistibly the storm break in  
And sever them, like green leaves from the boughs  
By summer whirlwinds torn! Ah, who would think  
That they who issue the destroying word,  
And they who thus consent to be destroyed,  
What Man, or Angel looking from the height  
Of tranquil pity, in his heart could deem  
That all the scattered subjects which compose  
Earth's melancholy vision, wretched some,  
Some careless, desperate these, and these depraved,  
Tyrants, and slaves who will consent [       ]  
Were of one species *etc.* MS.

Lodged, in a dear appropriated spot, 945  
 This file of infants ; some that never breathed  
 The vital air ; others, which, though allowed  
 That privilege, did yet expire too soon,  
 Or with too brief a warning, to admit  
 Administration of the holy rite 950  
 That lovingly consigns the babe to the arms  
 Of Jesus, and his everlasting care.  
 These that in trembling hope are laid apart ;  
 And the besprinkled nursling, unrequired  
 Till he begins to smile upon the breast 955  
 That feeds him ; and the tottering little-one  
 Taken from air and sunshine when the rose  
 Of infancy first blooms upon his cheek ;  
 The thinking, thoughtless, school-boy ; the bold youth  
 Of soul impetuous, and the bashful maid 960  
 Smitten while all the promises of life  
 Are opening round her ; those of middle age,  
 Cast down while confident in strength they stand,  
 Like pillars fixed more firmly, as might seem,  
 And more secure, by very weight of all 965  
 That, for support, rests on them ; the decayed  
 And burthensome ; and lastly, that poor few  
 Whose light of reason is with age extinct ;  
 The hopeful and the hopeless, first and last,  
 The earliest summoned and the longest spared— 970  
 Are here deposited, with tribute paid  
 Various, but unto each some tribute paid ;  
 As if, amid these peaceful hills and groves,  
 Society were touched with kind concern,  
 And gentle 'Nature grieved, that one should die ;' 975  
 Or, if the change demanded no regret,  
 Observed the liberating stroke—and blessed.

"And whence that tribute ? wherefore these regards ?  
 Not from the naked *Heart* alone of Man

945 so 1837: Did lodge, in an appropriated spot 1814-32 947 so  
 1837: and others, who, allowed MS., 1814-32 960 Exulting and  
 impetuous and the Maid MS.  
 964-6 As if more firmly fixed by very weight  
 Of those that rest upon them MS.  
 967 and that unconscious few C

(Though claiming high distinction upon earth 980  
 As the sole spring and fountain-head of tears,  
 His own peculiar utterance for distress  
 Or gladness)—No," the philosophic Priest  
 Continued, "'tis not in the vital seat  
 Of feeling to produce them, without aid 985  
 From the pure soul, the soul sublime and pure ;  
 With her two faculties of eye and ear,  
 The one by which a creature, whom his sins  
 Have rendered prone, can upward look to heaven ;  
 The other that empowers him to perceive 990  
 The voice of Deity, on height and plain,  
 Whispering those truths in stillness, which the WORD,  
 To the four quarters of the winds, proclaims.  
 Not without such assistance could the use  
 Of these benign observances prevail: 995  
 Thus are they born, thus fostered, thus maintained ;  
 And by the care prospective of our wise  
 Forefathers, who, to guard against the shocks,  
 The fluctuation and decay of things,  
 Embodied and established these high truths 1000  
 In solemn institutions:—men convinced  
 That life is love and immortality,  
 The being one, and one the element.  
 There lies the channel, and original bed,  
 From the beginning, hollowed out and scooped 1005  
 For Man's affections—else betrayed and lost,  
 And swallowed up 'mid deserts infinite!  
 This is the genuine course, the aim, and end  
 Of prescient reason ; all conclusions else  
 Are abject, vain, presumptuous, and perverse. 1010  
 The faith partaking of those holy times,  
 Life, I repeat, is energy of love  
 Divine or human ; exercised in pain,  
 In strife, in tribulation ; and ordained,  
 If so approved and sanctified, to pass, 1015  
 Through shades and silent rest, to endless joy."

980 claiming 1827: framed to MS., 1814-20 983-6 Or gladness)  
 no, but from the soul sublime MS. 987 faculties] ministers MS.  
 989 upward can C 996 fostered, thus 1837: fostered, and 1814-32:  
 Proceeding thence thereby they are maintained, MS. 1001 con-  
 vinced] believing MS. 1004-7 not in MS. 1008-11 added  
 to MS. on separate page

# BOOK SIXTH

## THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

### ARGUMENT

Poet's Address to the State and Church of England.—The Pastor not inferior to the ancient Worthies of the Church.—He begins his Narratives with an instance of unrequited Love.—Anguish of mind subdued, and how.—The lonely Miner.—An instance of perseverance.—Which leads by contrast to an example of abused talents, irresolution, and weakness.—Solitary, applying this covertly to his own case, asks for an instance of some Stranger, whose dispositions may have led him to end his days here.—Pastor, in answer, gives an account of the harmonising influence of Solitude upon two men of opposite principles, who had encountered agitations in public life.—The rule by which Peace may be obtained expressed, and where.—Solitary hints at an overpowering Fatality.—Answer of the Pastor.—What subjects he will exclude from his Narratives.—Conversation upon this.—Instance of an unamiable character, a Female,<sup>1</sup> and why given.—Contrasted with this, a meek sufferer, from unguarded and betrayed love.—Instance of heavier guilt, and its consequences to the Offender.—With this instance of a Marriage Contract broken is contrasted one of a Widower, evidencing his faithful affection towards his deceased wife by his care of their female Children.<sup>2</sup>

HAIL to the crown by Freedom shaped—to gird  
 An English Sovereign's brow! and to the throne  
 Whereon he sits! Whose deep foundations lie  
 In veneration and the people's love;  
 Whose steps are equity, whose seat is law. 5  
 —Hail to the State of England! And conjoin  
 With this a salutation as devout,  
 Made to the spiritual fabric of her Church;  
 Founded in truth; by blood of Martyrdom  
 Cemented; by the hands of Wisdom reared 10  
 In beauty of holiness, with ordered pomp,  
 Decent and unproved. The voice, that greets  
 The majesty of both, shall pray for both;  
 That, mutually protected and sustained,  
 They may endure long as the sea surrounds 15  
 This favoured Land, or sunshine warms her soil.

<sup>1</sup> Woman C  
 happy. 1814–20

<sup>2</sup> —Second Marriage of a Widower prudential and

And O, ye swelling hills, and spacious plains!  
 Besprent from shore to shore with steeple-towers,  
 And spires whose "silent finger points to heaven;"  
 Nor wanting, at wide intervals, the bulk 20  
 Of ancient minster lifted above the cloud  
 Of the dense air, which town or city breeds  
 To intercept the sun's glad beams—may ne'er  
 That true succession fail of English hearts,  
 Who, with ancestral feeling, can perceive 25  
 What in those holy structures ye possess  
 Of ornamental interest, and the charm  
 Of pious sentiment diffused afar,  
 And human charity, and social love.  
 —Thus never shall the indignities of time 30  
 Approach their reverend graces, unopposed;  
 Nor shall the elements be free to hurt  
 Their fair proportions; nor the blinder rage  
 Of bigot zeal madly to overturn;  
 And, if the desolating hand of war 35  
 Spare them, they shall continue to bestow,  
 Upon the thronged abodes of busy men  
 (Depraved, and ever prone to fill the mind  
 Exclusively with transitory things)  
 An air and mien of dignified pursuit; 40  
 Of sweet civility, on rustic wilds.

The Poet, fostering for his native land  
 Such hope, entreats that servants may abound  
 Of those pure altars worthy; ministers  
 Detached from pleasure, to the love of gain 45  
 Superior, insusceptible of pride,  
 And by ambitious longings undisturbed;  
 Men, whose delight is where their duty leads  
 Or fixes them; whose least distinguished day

21 lifted] rising, *corr. to* reared MS.

25 *so* 1827: That can perceive, not less than heretofore

Our Ancestors did feelingly perceive MS., 1814–20

31 Approach those reverend Fabrics MS.

32 hurt] mar MS.

35–6 if . . . they shall] may . . . and they MS.  
 their minds MS., 1814–32

38 the mind 1837:

42–3 Thus wishing, can the Poet fail to add

An earnest prayer that MS.

47 ambition's 1814–20

Shines with some portion of that heavenly lustre 50  
 Which makes the sabbath lovely in the sight  
 Of blessed angels, pitying human cares.  
 —And, as on earth it is the doom of truth  
 To be perpetually attacked by foes  
 Open or covert, be that priesthood still, 55  
 For her defence, replenished with a band  
 Of strenuous champions, in scholastic arts  
 Thoroughly disciplined ; nor (if in course  
 Of the revolving world's disturbances  
 Cause should recur, which righteous Heaven avert ! 60  
 To meet such trial) from their spiritual sires  
 Degenerate ; who, constrained to wield the sword  
 Of disputation, shrunk not, though assailed  
 With hostile din, and combating in sight  
 Of angry umpires, partial and unjust ; 65  
 And did, thereafter, bathe their hands in fire,  
 So to declare the conscience satisfied :  
 Nor for their bodies would accept release ;  
 But, blessing God and praising him, bequeathed  
 With their last breath, from out the smouldering flame, 70  
 The faith which they by diligence had earned,  
 Or, through illuminating grace, received,  
 For their dear countrymen, and all mankind.  
 O high example, constancy divine !

Even such a Man (inheriting the zeal 75  
 And from the sanctity of elder times  
 Not deviating,—a priest, the like of whom,  
 If multiplied, and in their stations set,  
 Would o'er the bosom of a joyful land  
 Spread true religion and her genuine fruits) 80  
 Before me stood that day ; on holy ground  
 Fraught with the relics of mortality,  
 Exalting tender themes, by just degrees  
 To lofty raised ; and to the highest, last ;  
 The head and mighty paramount of truths,— 85  
 Immortal life, in never-fading worlds,  
 For mortal creatures, conquered and secured.

That basis laid, those principles of faith  
 Announced, as a preparatory act  
 Of reverence done to the spirit of the place, 90  
 The Pastor cast his eyes upon the ground ;  
 Not, as before, like one oppressed with awe,  
 But with a mild and social cheerfulness ;  
 Then to the Solitary turned, and spake.

“At morn or eve, in your retired domain, 95  
 Perchance you not unfrequently have marked  
 A Visitor—in quest of herbs and flowers ;  
 Too delicate employ, as would appear,  
 For one, who, though of drooping mien, had yet  
 From nature’s kindness received a frame 100  
 Robust as ever rural labour bred.”

The Solitary answered: “Such a Form  
 Full well I recollect. We often crossed  
 Each other’s path ; but, as the Intruder seemed  
 Fondly to prize the silence which he kept, 105  
 And I as willingly did cherish mine,  
 We met, and passed, like shadows. I have heard,  
 From my good Host, that being crazed in brain  
 By unrequited love, he scaled the rocks,  
 Dived into caves, and pierced the matted woods, 110  
 In hope to find some virtuous herb of power  
 To cure his malady!”

The Vicar smiled,—  
 “Alas! before to-morrow’s sun goes down  
 His habitation will be here: for him  
 That open grave is destined.”

“Died he then 115

90 done] *added* 1845

97 *so* 1827: A Visitor—intent upon the task

Of prying, low and high, for herbs and flowers MS., 1814–20

97/8 You cannot but have noticed him—he ranged

Through two years’ space these mountains, every flower  
 Collecting as successively they blow

On rock, in dells, or by the plashy springs MS.

103 Often we crossed C

108–9 *so* 1837: that he was crazed in brain

By unrequited love ; and scaled the rocks, [clomb the crags  
 MS.] MS., 1814–32

Of pain and grief?" the Solitary asked,  
 "Do not believe it; never could that be!"

"He loved," the Vicar answered, "deeply loved,  
 Loved fondly, truly, fervently; and dared  
 At length to tell his love, but sued in vain; 120  
 Rejected, yea repelled; and, if with scorn  
 Upon the haughty maiden's brow, 'tis but  
 A high-prized plume which female Beauty wears  
 In wantonness of conquest, or puts on  
 To cheat the world, or from herself to hide 125  
 Humiliation, when no longer free.  
*That* he could brook, and glory in;—but when  
 The tidings came that she whom he had wooed  
 Was wedded to another, and his heart  
 Was forced to rend away its only hope; 130  
 Then, Pity could have scarcely found on earth  
 An object worthier of regard than he,  
 In the transition of that bitter hour!  
 Lost was she, lost; nor could the Sufferer say  
 That in the act of preference he had been 135  
 Unjustly dealt with; but the Maid was gone!  
 Had vanished from his prospects and desires;  
 Not by translation to the heavenly choir  
 Who have put off their mortal spoils—ah no!  
 She lives another's wishes to complete,— 140  
 'Joy be their lot, and happiness,' he cried,  
 'His lot and hers, as misery must be mine!'

"Such was that strong concussion; but the Man,  
 Who trembled, trunk and limbs, like some huge oak  
 By a fierce tempest shaken, soon resumed 145  
 The stedfast quiet natural to a mind  
 Of composition gentle and sedate,

117 so 1837: "Believe it not—Oh! never could that be!" MS., 1814–32  
 119 fervently] hopelessly MS. 119–20 so 1827: and pined When  
 he had told his love, and MS., 1814–20  
 124–6 added 1827

136/7 She, whose dear name with unregarded sighs  
 He long had blessed, whose Image was preserved—  
 Shrined in his breast with fond idolatry, MS., 1814–20  
 137/8 Happy her Husband was, and wretched He MS. *del.*  
 142 must be 1845: is MS., 1814–43: misery henceforth is mine C  
 146 stedfast] outward MS.

And, in its movements, circumspect and slow.  
 To books, and to the long-forsaken desk,  
 O'er which enchained by science he had loved 150  
 To bend, he stoutly re-addressed himself,  
 Resolved to quell his pain, and search for truth  
 With keener appetite (if that might be)  
 And closer industry. Of what ensued  
 Within the heart no outward sign appeared 155  
 Till a betraying sickliness was seen  
 To tinge his cheek; and through his frame it crept  
 With slow mutation unconcealable;  
 Such universal change as autumn makes  
 In the fair body of a leafy grove 160  
 Discoloured, then divested.

'Tis affirmed  
 By poets skilled in nature's secret ways  
 That Love will not submit to be controlled  
 By mastery:—and the good Man lacked not friends  
 Who strove to instil this truth into his mind, 165  
 A mind in all heart-mysteries unversed.  
 'Go to the hills,' said one, 'remit a while  
 This baneful diligence:—at early morn  
 Court the fresh air, explore the heaths and woods;  
 And, leaving it to others to foretell, 170

149-53 so 1827: Of rustic Parents bred, (born MS.) He had been trained,  
 (So prompted their aspiring wish) to skill

In numbers and the sedentary art and the labours of the pen  
 Of penmanship,—with pride pro- Mute sedentary arts by which he  
 fessed, and taught earned,

By his endeavours in the mountain Teaching the swains, his main-  
 dales. tenance; and now

Now, those sad tidings weighing on  
 his heart,

To books, and papers, and the studi- To books, and papers, and the studi-  
 ous desk, ous desk,

He stoutly readdressed himself— He stoutly readdressed himself—  
 resolved resolved

To quell his pain, and enter on the To quell his pain, or if not quell,  
 path deceive,

Of old pursuits with keener appetite By entering on the path of old pur-  
 suits

And closer industry 1814-20 With keener appetite. MS.

155 the heart 1827: his soul MS., 1814-20 157 To o'erspread his  
 cheek MS. 158 not to be concealed MS. 168 This most

injurious diligence, at morn MS.

By calculations sage, the ebb and flow  
 Of tides, and when the moon will be eclipsed,  
 Do you, for your own benefit, construct  
 A calendar of flowers, plucked as they blow  
 Where health abides, and cheerfulness, and peace.' 175  
 The attempt was made;—'tis needless to report  
 How hopelessly; but innocence is strong,  
 And an entire simplicity of mind  
 A thing most sacred in the eye of Heaven;  
 That opens, for such sufferers, relief 180  
 Within the soul, fountains of grace divine;  
 And doth commend their weakness and disease  
 To Nature's care, assisted in her office  
 By all the elements that round her wait  
 To generate, to preserve, and to restore; 185  
 And by her beautiful array of forms  
 Shedding sweet influence from above; or pure  
 Delight exhaling from the ground they tread."

"Impute it not to impatience, if," exclaimed  
 The Wanderer, "I infer that he was healed 190  
 By perseverance in the course prescribed."

"You do not err: the powers, that had been lost  
 By slow degrees, were gradually regained;  
 The fluttering nerves composed; the beating heart  
 In rest established; and the jarring thoughts 195  
 To harmony restored.—But yon dark mould  
 Will cover him, in the fulness of his strength,  
 Hastily smitten by a fever's force;  
 Yet not with stroke so sudden as refused  
 Time to look back with tenderness on her 200  
 Whom he had loved in passion; and to send  
 Some farewell words—with one, but one, request;  
 That, from his dying hand, she would accept  
 Of his possessions that which most he prized;

181 the soul, fountains 1837: their souls, a fount MS., 1814–32

189–90 Ascribe . . . here exclaimed . . . if I guess MS. 192–3 powers  
 that . . . were] strength which . . . was MS.

195–6 Established in tranquillity, the heart

Brought back to Reason's sway— MS.

197 so 1832: in height [pride MS.] of strength—to earth MS., 1814–27

202 so 1827: . . . words; and, with those words, a prayer, MS., 1814–20

A book, upon whose leaves some chosen plants, 205  
 By his own hand disposed with nicest care,  
 In undecaying beauty were preserved ;  
 Mute register, to him, of time and place,  
 And various fluctuations in the breast ;  
 To her, a monument of faithful love 210  
 Conquered, and in tranquillity retained !

“Close to his destined habitation, lies  
 One who achieved a humbler victory,  
 Though marvellous in its kind. A place there is  
 High in these mountains, that allured a band 215  
 Of keen adventurers to unite their pains  
 In search of precious ore: they tried, were foiled—  
 And all desisted, all, save him alone.  
 He, taking counsel of his own clear thoughts,  
 And trusting only to his own weak hands, 220  
 Urged unremittingly the stubborn work,  
 Unseconded, uncountenanced ; then, as time  
 Passed on, while still his lonely efforts found  
 No recompense, derided ; and at length,  
 By many pitied, as insane of mind ; 225  
 By others dreaded as the luckless thrall  
 Of subterranean Spirits feeding hope  
 By various mockery of sight and sound ;  
 Hope after hope, encouraged and destroyed.  
 —But when the lord of seasons had matured 230  
 The fruits of earth through space of twice ten years,  
 The mountain’s entrails offered to his view  
 And trembling grasp the long-deferred reward.  
 Not with more transport did Columbus greet

205–6 *so* 1827: . . . the surface of whose leaves Some chosen plants, 1814–20:  
 within whose leaves the forms of plants MS., *omitting l.* 206 208  
 of tenderest thoughts MS.

213–14 *so* 1827: One whose Endeavours did at length achieve  
 A victory less worthy of regard,  
 Though marvellous in its kind. A Place exists 1814–20

217 *so* 1827 (*but who for they* 1827–32):

In search of treasure there by Nature formed,  
 And there concealed: but they who tried were foiled 1814–20

232–3 *so* 1827: . . . the view  
 Of the Old Man, and to his trembling grasp  
 His bright, his long-deferred, his dear reward. 1814–20

A world, his rich discovery! But our Swain, 235  
 A very hero till his point was gained,  
 Proved all unable to support the weight  
 Of prosperous fortune. On the fields he looked  
 With an unsettled liberty of thought,  
 Wishes and endless schemes; by daylight walked 240  
 Giddy and restless; ever and anon  
 Quaffed in his gratitude immoderate cups;  
 And truly might be said to die of joy!  
 He vanished; but conspicuous to this day  
 The path remains that linked his cottage-door 245  
 To the mine's mouth; a long and slanting track,  
 Upon the rugged mountain's stony side,  
 Worn by his daily visits to and from  
 The darksome centre of a constant hope.  
 This vestige, neither force of beating rain, 250  
 Nor the vicissitudes of frost and thaw  
 Shall cause to fade, till ages pass away;  
 And it is named, in memory of the event,  
 The PATH OF PERSEVERANCE."

"Thou from whom  
 Man has his strength," exclaimed the Wanderer, "oh! 255  
 Do thou direct it! To the virtuous grant  
 The penetrative eye which can perceive  
 In this blind world the guiding vein of hope;  
 That, like this Labourer, such may dig their way,  
 'Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified;' 260  
 Grant to the wise *his* firmness of resolve!"

"That prayer were not superfluous," said the Priest,  
 "Amid the noblest relics, proudest dust,  
 That Westminster, for Britain's glory, holds  
 Within the bosom of her awful pile, 265  
 Ambitiously collected. Yet the sigh,  
 Which wafts that prayer to heaven, is due to all,  
 Wherever laid, who living fell below  
 Their virtue's humbler mark; a sigh of *pain*  
 If to the opposite extreme they sank. 270  
 How would you pity her who yonder rests;  
 Him, farther off; the pair, who here are laid;  
 But, above all, that mixture of earth's mould

Whom sight of this green hillock to my mind  
Recals!

*He* lived not till his locks were nipped 275  
By seasonable frost of age ; nor died  
Before his temples, prematurely forced  
To mix the manly brown with silver grey,  
Gave obvious instance of the sad effect  
Produced, when thoughtless Folly hath usurped 280  
The natural crown that sage Experience wears.  
Gay, volatile, ingenious, quick to learn,  
And prompt to exhibit all that he possessed  
Or could perform ; a zealous actor, hired  
Into the troop of mirth, a soldier, sworn 285  
Into the lists of giddy enterprise—  
Such was he ; yet, as if within his frame  
Two several souls alternately had lodged,  
Two sets of manners could the Youth put on ;  
And, fraught with antics as the Indian bird 290  
That writhes and chatters in her wiry cage,  
Was graceful, when it pleased him, smooth and still  
As the mute swan that floats adown the stream,  
Or, on the waters of the unruffled lake,  
Anchors her placid beauty. Not a leaf, 295  
That flutters on the bough, lighter than he ;  
And not a flower, that droops in the green shade,  
More winningly reserved ! If ye enquire  
How such consummate elegance was bred  
Amid these wilds, this answer may suffice ; 300  
'Twas Nature's will ; who sometimes undertakes,  
For the reproof of human vanity,  
Art to outstrip in her peculiar walk.  
Hence, for this Favourite—lavishly endowed  
With personal gifts, and bright instinctive wit, 305

275

. . . Near the Turf

Which hides that strenuous Labourer's furrowed brow  
Lies one who lived not *etc.* MS.

296 lighter 1840: more light MS., 1814-37 299-300 How in these  
wilds such elegance was bred Mid rustic swains MS.

300 so 1827: Amid these wilds ; a Composition framed

Of qualities so adverse—to diffuse,  
Where'er he moved, diversified delight ;

A simple answer may suffice, even this, MS., 1814-20

While both, embellishing each other, stood  
 Yet farther recommended by the charm  
 Of fine demeanour, and by dance and song,  
 And skill in letters—every fancy shaped  
 Fair expectations; nor, when to the world's 310  
 Capacious field forth went the Adventurer, there  
 Were he and his attainments overlooked,  
 Or scantily rewarded; but all hopes,  
 Cherished for him, he suffered to depart,  
 Like blighted buds; or clouds that mimicked land 315  
 Before the sailor's eye; or diamond drops  
 That sparkling decked the morning grass; or aught  
 That *was* attractive, and hath ceased to be!

“Yet, when this Prodigal returned, the rites  
 Of joyful greeting were on him bestowed, 320  
 Who, by humiliation undeterred,  
 Sought for his weariness a place of rest  
 Within his Father's gates.—Whence came he?—clothed  
 In tattered garb, from hovels where abides  
 Necessity, the stationary host 325  
 Of vagrant poverty; from rifted barns  
 Where no one dwells but the wide-staring owl  
 And the owl's prey; from these bare haunts, to which  
 He had descended from the proud saloon,  
 He came, the ghost of beauty and of health, 330  
 The wreck of gaiety! But soon revived  
 In strength, in power refitted, he renewed  
 His suit to Fortune; and she smiled again  
 Upon a fickle Ingrate. Thrice he rose,  
 Thrice sank as willingly. For he—whose nerves 335  
 Were used to thrill with pleasure, while his voice  
 Softly accompanied the tuneful harp,  
 By the nice finger of fair ladies touched  
 In glittering halls—was able to derive  
 No less enjoyment from an abject choice. 340  
 Who happier for the moment—who more blithe  
 Than this fallen Spirit? in those dreary holds

309 shaped] framed MS.

328 so 1827: And the Owl's Prey; none permanently house  
 But many harbour; from these Haunts, to which MS., 1814-  
 20

334 fickle] faithless MS.

335-6 nerves Were] heart Was MS.

His talents lending to exalt the freaks  
 Of merry-making beggars,—now, provoked  
 To laughter multiplied in louder peals 345  
 By his malicious wit; then, all enchained  
 With mute astonishment, themselves to see  
 In their own arts outdone, their fame eclipsed,  
 As by the very presence of the Fiend  
 Who dictates and inspires illusive feats, 350  
 For knavish purposes! The city, too,  
 (With shame I speak it) to her guilty bowers  
 Allured him, sunk so low in self-respect  
 As there to linger, there to eat his bread,  
 Hired minstrel of voluptuous blandishment; 355  
 Charming the air with skill of hand or voice,  
 Listen who would, be wrought upon who might,  
 Sincerely wretched hearts, or falsely gay.  
 —Such the too frequent tenour of his boast  
 In ears that relished the report;—but all 360  
 Was from his Parents happily concealed;  
 Who saw enough for blame and pitying love.  
 They also were permitted to receive  
 His last, repentant breath; and closed his eyes,  
 No more to open on that irksome world 365  
 Where he had long existed in the state  
 Of a young fowl beneath one mother hatched,  
 Though from another sprung, different in kind:  
 Where he had lived, and could not cease to live,  
 Distracted in propensity; content 370  
 With neither element of good or ill;  
 And yet in both rejoicing; man unblest;  
 Of contradictions infinite the slave,  
 Till his deliverance, when Mercy made him  
 One with himself, and one with them that sleep.” 375  
 “ ’Tis strange,” observed the Solitary, “strange  
 It seems, and scarcely less than pitiful,  
 That in a land where charity provides  
 For all that can no longer feed themselves,

359 so 1827: —Truths I record to many known, for each

The not infrequent tenor MS., 1814–20

362 for pity and for love MS. 365 irksome] vexing MS.

368 so 1837: of different race MS.: of different kind 1814–32

375 so 1837: those who MS., 1814–20: them who 1827–32

A man like this should choose to bring his shame 380  
 To the parental door ; and with his sighs  
 Infect the air which he had freely breathed  
 In happy infancy. He could not pine  
 Through lack of converse ; no—he must have found  
 Abundant exercise for thought and speech, 385  
 In his dividual being, self-reviewed,  
 Self-catechised, self-punished.—Some there are  
 Who, drawing near their final home, and much  
 And daily longing that the same were reached,  
 Would rather shun than seek the fellowship 390  
 Of kindred mould.—Such haply here are laid ?”

“Yes,” said the Priest, “the Genius of our hills—  
 Who seems, by these stupendous barriers cast  
 Round his domain, desirous not alone  
 To keep his own, but also to exclude 395  
 All other progeny—doth sometimes lure,  
 Even by his studied depth of privacy,  
 The unhappy alien hoping to obtain  
 Concealment, or seduced by wish to find,  
 In place from outward molestation free, 400  
 Helps to internal ease. Of many such  
 Could I discourse ; but as their stay was brief,  
 So their departure only left behind  
 Fancies, and loose conjectures. Other trace  
 Survives, for worthy mention, of a pair 405  
 Who, from the pressure of their several fates,  
 Meeting as strangers, in a petty town

381 parental] paternal MS. 383/4 (Whence e'er rejected, howsoe'er  
 forlorn) MS., 1814-20 393 Who might appear by these stern bar-  
 riers cast MS. 397 so 1845: this very depth MS.: this studied  
 depth 1814-43 399 Needful concealment or a hope to find MS.  
 404-12 . . . conjectures. Yet this vale

Retains no faint remembrance of a pair  
 Who driven at separate times, by diverse fates (*corr. to text*)  
 Here met as strangers, and remained as Friends  
 Content ; and finally did leave in sign  
 Of friendship and of genial gratitude,  
 For hospitable kindness left their bones  
 In this green spot, unscutcheoned and remote, MS. *last 4 lines corr. to*  
 True to their choice ; and as a last effect  
 And evidence of friendship and a sign  
 Of a participated gratitude.  
 For local recollections gave their bones *etc. as text*

Whose blue roofs ornament a distant reach  
 Of this far-winding vale, remained as friends  
 True to their choice; and gave their bones in trust 410  
 To this loved cemetery, here to lodge  
 With unescutcheoned privacy interred  
 Far from the family vault.—A Chieftain one  
 By right of birth; within whose spotless breast  
 The fire of ancient Caledonia burned: 415  
 He, with the foremost whose impatience hailed  
 The Stuart, landing to resume, by force  
 Of arms, the crown which bigotry had lost,  
 Aroused his clan; and, fighting at their head,  
 With his brave sword endeavoured to prevent 420  
 Culloden's fatal overthrow. Escaped  
 From that disastrous rout, to foreign shores  
 He fled; and when the lenient hand of time  
 Those troubles had appeased, he sought and gained,  
 For his obscured condition, an obscure 425  
 Retreat, within this nook of English ground.

"The other, born in Britain's southern tract,  
 Had fixed his milder loyalty, and placed  
 His gentler sentiments of love and hate,  
 There, where *they* placed them who in conscience prized 430  
 The new succession, as a line of kings  
 Whose oath had virtue to protect the land  
 Against the dire assaults of papacy  
 And arbitrary rule. But launch thy bark  
 On the distempered flood of public life, 435  
 And cause for most rare triumph will be thine  
 If, spite of keenest eye and steadiest hand,  
 The stream, that bears thee forward, prove not, soon  
 Or late, a perilous master. He—who oft,  
 Beneath the battlements and stately trees 440  
 That round his mansion cast a sober gloom,  
 Had moralised on this, and other truths  
 Of kindred import, pleased and satisfied—

431-2 . . . succession, as their best defence,  
 The House of Brunswick as their country's shield MS.

436-9 And to thy peril thou shalt surely find  
 That spite of watchful eye and stediest hand  
 The flood will be its master MS.

440 Beneath 1837: Under MS., 1814-32

Was forced to vent his wisdom with a sigh  
 Heaved from the heart in fortune's bitterness, 445  
 When he had crushed a plentiful estate  
 By ruinous contest, to obtain a seat  
 In Britain's senate. Fruitless was the attempt:  
 And while the uproar of that desperate strife  
 Continued yet to vibrate on his ear, 450  
 The vanquished Whig, under a borrowed name,  
 (For the mere sound and echo of his own  
 Haunted him with sensations of disgust

443 pleased] soothed MS.

446-64 When he had served his Country—to the loss  
 Of a most plentiful and fair Estate  
 His old Inheritance! Imagine not  
 That I deride the Patriot's worthy aim (strife of civic zeal)  
 With (And) needful efforts in a generous cause,  
 Virtue forbid, sweet Liberty reject  
 A sneer so senseless with thy prouder scorn,  
 I but repeat the censure which, 'tis said,  
 The mild good man would pass upon himself  
 Most freely when recovered from his heat  
 Of blood and giddiness of brain, he heard  
 Far more distinctly than his living ear  
 Had ever heard the intelligible sounds  
 Of his devoted followers. MS. *draft i deleted*  
 When he had served . . . Estate *as above*  
 An honoured birthright fruitlessly dispersed  
 (An honoured birthright in his own despite  
 Consumed by an insatiable crowd  
 Of Partizans, good wishes bawling forth  
 For all the precious rights of Church and State  
 And these their staunch defenders. But at length  
 The Contest closed and then he might have seen *draft iii*)  
 For when the contest closed, he might have seen  
 His Tory Rival, bowing thanks, and smiles  
 Of triumph shedding from the uplifted Chair  
 Throne dearly bought, by mutual ruin gained.  
 Forthwith the din of that protracted (uproar of that desperate)  
 strife  
 Not ceasing yet to hang upon his ear,  
 Vex'd, beggar'd and discomfited, the Whig  
 Slunk to the shade, beneath a borrowed name,  
 The very sound and echo of his own  
 So much disgusted him. And here they met  
 Like adverse Planets—flaming Jacobite  
 And sullen Hanoverian. I have heard  
 My grey-haired Sire relate that mid the peace MS. *draft ii*  
 451 under 1837: beneath 1814-32

That he was glad to lose) slunk from the world  
 To the deep shade of those untraveller'd Wilds ; 455  
 In which the Scottish Laird had long possessed  
 An undisturbed abode. Here, then, they met,  
 Two doughty champions ; flaming Jacobite  
 And sullen Hanoverian ! You might think  
 That losses and vexations, less severe 460  
 Than those which they had severally sustained,  
 Would have inclined each to abate his zeal  
 For his ungrateful cause ; no,—I have heard  
 My reverend Father tell that, 'mid the calm  
 Of that small town encountering thus, they filled, 465  
 Daily, its bowling-green with harmless strife ;  
 Plagued with uncharitable thoughts the church ;  
 And vexed the market-place. But in the breasts  
 Of these opponents gradually was wrought,  
 With little change of general sentiment, 470  
 Such leaning towards each other, that their days  
 By choice were spent in constant fellowship ;  
 And if, at times, they fretted with the yoke,  
 Those very bickerings made them love it more.

"A favourite boundary to their lengthened walks 475  
 This Churchyard was. And, whether they had come  
 Treading their path in sympathy and linked  
 In social converse, or by some short space  
 Discreetly parted to preserve the peace,  
 One spirit seldom failed to extend its sway 480  
 Over both minds, when they awhile had marked  
 The visible quiet of this holy ground,

455 those 1834: these 1814-32

467-8 And church and market suffered from the feud  
 By them excited. But within the breasts MS.

471 leaning 1845: change 1814-43

471-4 Such change towards each other that they bare  
 The yoke of fellowship from morn to night,  
 Companions, friends inseparably dear  
 Their very bickering knotting them more close. MS.

477-8 . . . in cordial intercourse

And sympathizing converse, or at worst MS.

481-3 . . . breathed,

Together seated in this holy place,  
 Its tranquillizing air MS.

And breathed its soothing air ;—the spirit of hope  
 And saintly magnanimity ; that—spurning  
 The field of selfish difference and dispute, 485  
 And every care which transitory things,  
 Earth and the kingdoms of the earth, create—  
 Doth, by a rapture of forgetfulness,  
 Preclude forgiveness, from the praise debarred,  
 Which else the Christian virtue might have claimed. 490

“There live who yet remember here to have seen  
 Their courtly figures, seated on the stump  
 Of an old yew, their favourite resting-place.  
 But as the remnant of the long-lived tree  
 Was disappearing by a swift decay, 495  
 They, with joint care, determined to erect,  
 Upon its site, a dial, that might stand  
 For public use preserved, and thus survive  
 As their own private monument: for this  
 Was the particular spot, in which they wished 500  
 (And Heaven was pleased to accomplish the desire)  
 That, undivided, their remains should lie.  
 So, where the mouldered tree had stood, was raised  
 Yon structure, framing, with the ascent of steps  
 That to the decorated pillar lead, 505  
 A work of art more sumptuous than might seem  
 To suit this place ; yet built in no proud scorn  
 Of rustic homeliness ; they only aimed  
 To ensure for it respectful guardianship.  
 Around the margin of the plate, whereon 510  
 The shadow falls to note the stealthy hours,  
 Winds an inscriptive legend.”—At these words  
 Thither we turned ; and gathered, as we read,  
 The appropriate sense, in Latin numbers couched :  
 “*Time flies; it is his melancholy task* 515

497–8 so 1827: . . . which should stand  
 For public use ; and also might survive 1814–20  
 . . . a little work of art  
 For public use, which also might survive MS.  
 504 structure] Dial MS.

506–7 so 1827: . . . as might seem,  
 Than suits this Place MS., 1814–20

506–8 A sumptuous Structure built in no proud scorn  
 Of homely rustic taste, but thus they hope MS.

*To bring, and bear away, delusive hopes,  
 And re-produce the troubles he destroys.  
 But, while his blindness thus is occupied,  
 Discerning Mortal ! do thou serve the will  
 Of Time's eternal Master, and that peace,* 520  
*Which the world wants, shall be for thee confirmed !"*

"Smooth verse, inspired by no unlettered Muse,"  
 Exclaimed the Sceptic, "and the strain of thought  
 Accords with nature's language ;—the soft voice  
 Of yon white torrent falling down the rocks 525  
 Speaks, less distinctly, to the same effect.  
 If, then, their blended influence be not lost  
 Upon our hearts, not wholly lost, I grant,  
 Even upon mine, the more are we required  
 To feel for those among our fellow-men, 530  
 Who, offering no obeisance to the world,  
 Are yet made desperate by 'too quick a sense  
 Of constant infelicity,' cut off  
 From peace like exiles on some barren rock,  
 Their life's appointed prison ; not more free 535  
 Than sentinels, between two armies, set,  
 With nothing better, in the chill night air,  
 Than their own thoughts to comfort them. Say why  
 That ancient story of Prometheus chained  
 To the bare rock, on frozen Caucasus ; 540  
 The vulture, the inexhaustible repast  
 Drawn from his vitals ? Say what meant the woes  
 By Tantalus entailed upon his race,  
 And the dark sorrows of the line of Thebes ?  
 Fictions in form, but in their substance truths, 545  
 Tremendous truths ! familiar to the men  
 Of long-past times, nor obsolete in ours.  
 Exchange the shepherd's frock of native grey  
 For robes with regal purple tinged ; convert  
 The crook into a sceptre ; give the pomp 550  
 Of circumstance ; and here the tragic Muse  
 Shall find apt subjects for her highest art.  
 Amid the groves, under the shadowy hills,  
 The generations are prepared ; the pangs,  
 The internal pangs, are ready ; the dread strife 555

Of poor humanity's afflicted will  
Struggling in vain with ruthless destiny."

"Though," said the Priest in answer, "these be terms  
Which a divine philosophy rejects,  
We, whose established and unfailing trust 560  
Is in controlling Providence, admit  
That, through all stations, human life abounds  
With mysteries;—for, if Faith were left untried,  
How could the might, that lurks within her, then  
Be shown? her glorious excellence—that ranks 565  
Among the first of Powers and Virtues—proved?  
Our system is not fashioned to preclude  
That sympathy which you for others ask;  
And I could tell, not travelling for my theme  
Beyond these humble graves, of grievous crimes 570  
And strange disasters; but I pass them by,  
Loth to disturb what Heaven hath hushed in peace.  
—Still less, far less, am I inclined to treat  
Of Man degraded in his Maker's sight  
By the deformities of brutish vice: 575  
For, in such portraits, though a vulgar face  
And a coarse outside of repulsive life  
And unaffected manners might at once  
Be recognised by all—" "Ah! do not think,"  
The Wanderer somewhat eagerly exclaimed, 580  
"Wish could be ours that you, for such poor gain,  
(Gain shall I call it?—gain of what?—for whom?)  
Should breathe a word tending to violate  
Your own pure spirit. Not a step we look for  
In slight of that forbearance and reserve 585  
Which common human-heartedness inspires,  
And mortal ignorance and frailty claim,  
Upon this sacred ground, if nowhere else."

570-1 *so* 1827: Beyond the limits of these humble graves, Of *etc.* 1814-20

573-6 Whom shall we turn to next? Ye asked for truth

And unadulterate truth shall ye receive.

But vice, depravity and low desires

These will creep in wherever man is found

And out of such material might be framed

Harsh Portraiture, in which a vulgar face MS.

576 *so* 1827: For, though from these materials *etc.* *as* MS., 1814-20

"True," said the Solitary, "be it far  
 From us to infringe the laws of charity. 590  
 Let judgment here in mercy be pronounced;  
 This, self-respecting Nature prompts, and this  
 Wisdom enjoins; but if the thing we seek  
 Be genuine knowledge, bear we then in mind  
 How, from his lofty throne, the sun can fling 595  
 Colours as bright on exhalations bred  
 By weedy pool or pestilential swamp,  
 As by the rivulet sparkling where it runs,  
 Or the pellucid lake."

"Small risk," said I,  
 "Of such illusion do we here incur; 600  
 Temptation here is none to exceed the truth;  
 No evidence appears that they who rest  
 Within this ground, were covetous of praise,  
 Or of remembrance even, deserved or not.  
 Green is the Churchyard, beautiful and green, 605  
 Ridge rising gently by the side of ridge,  
 A heaving surface, almost wholly free  
 From interruption of sepulchral stones,  
 And mantled o'er with aboriginal turf  
 And everlasting flowers. These Dalesmen trust 610  
 The lingering gleam of their departed lives  
 To oral record, and the silent heart;  
 Depositories faithful and more kind  
 Than fondest epitaph: for, if those fail,  
 What boots the sculptured tomb? And who can blame, 615  
 Who rather would not envy, men that feel  
 This mutual confidence; if, from such source,  
 The practice flow,—if thence, or from a deep  
 And general humility in death?

589 Solitary] pensive sceptic MS.

594-8 Be what the understanding shall respect  
 As truth and knowledge, bear we then in mind  
 How from his lofty seat the sun can paint  
 Colours as bright on exhalations risen  
 From pestilential bog or noisome swamp  
 As from *etc. as text* MS.

607 A heaving] An undulating *corr. to* A billowy MS. 611-13 record  
 . . . Depositories . . . if those fail 1837: records . . . Depository . . . if it  
 fail MS., 1814-20: *so* 1827-32 *but* if that fail 615 tomb] stone MS.

Nor should I much condemn it, if it spring 620  
 From disregard of time's destructive power,  
 As only capable to prey on things  
 Of earth, and human nature's mortal part.

“Yet—in less simple districts, where we see  
 Stone lift its forehead emulous of stone 625  
 In courting notice; and the ground all paved  
 With commendations of departed worth;  
 Reading, where'er we turn, of innocent lives,  
 Of each domestic charity fulfilled,  
 And sufferings meekly borne—I, for my part, 630  
 Though with the silence pleased that here prevails,  
 Among those fair recitals also range,  
 Soothed by the natural spirit which they breathe.  
 And, in the centre of a world whose soil  
 Is rank with all unkindness, compassed round 635  
 With such memorials, I have sometimes felt,  
 It was no momentary happiness  
 To have *one* Enclosure where the voice that speaks  
 In envy or detraction is not heard;  
 Which malice may not enter; where the traces 640  
 Of evil inclinations are unknown;  
 Where love and pity tenderly unite  
 With resignation; and no jarring tone  
 Intrudes, the peaceful concert to disturb  
 Of amity and gratitude.”

“Thus sanctioned,” 645  
 The Pastor said, “I willingly confine  
 My narratives to subjects that excite  
 Feelings with these accordant; love, esteem,  
 And admiration; lifting up a veil,  
 A sunbeam introducing among hearts 650  
 Retired and covert; so that ye shall have  
 Clear images before your gladdened eyes  
 Of nature's unambitious underwood,

621 destructive] consuming MS. 623 mortal] earthly MS.

625-9 Upon the front of each memorial stone  
 Conspicuous attestation, in a stream  
 Unvaried, of integrity and worth;  
 Religious duties zealously performed,  
 And each *etc.* MS.

And flowers that prosper in the shade. And when  
 I speak of such among my flock as swerved 655  
 Or fell, those only shall be singled out  
 Upon whose lapse, or error, something more  
 Than brotherly forgiveness may attend ;  
 To such will we restrict our notice, else  
 Better my tongue were mute.

And yet there are, 660  
 I feel, good reasons why we should not leave  
 Wholly untraced a more forbidding way.  
 For, strength to persevere and to support,  
 And energy to conquer and repel—  
 These elements of virtue, that declare 665  
 The native grandeur of the human soul—  
 Are oft-times not unprofitably shown  
 In the perverseness of a selfish course :  
 Truth every day exemplified, no less  
 In the grey cottage by the murmuring stream 670  
 Than in fantastic conqueror's roving camp,  
 Or 'mid the factious senate unappalled  
 Whoe'er may sink, or rise—to sink again,  
 As merciless proscription ebbs and flows.

"There," said the Vicar, pointing as he spake, 675  
 "A woman rests in peace ; surpassed by few  
 In power of mind, and eloquent discourse.  
 Tall was her stature ; her complexion dark  
 And saturnine ; her head not raised to hold  
 Converse with heaven, nor yet deprest towards earth, 680  
 But in projection carried, as she walked

656 will I single out MS., 1814-32

661/2 For passionate regards of love and hate,  
 Magnanimous disdain and courage high MS.

663 For] And MS. 671 in 1827: the 1814-20 672 'mid  
 1827: in 1814-20 673 added 1845 674 As 1845: While  
 MS., 1843

674/5 Shifting its course as no one can foresee

And Power almighty only may controul C

675 Vicar, pointing] Priest, and pointed MS.

676 . . . distinguished above all

Of her estate whom I have chanced to know MS.

679 so 1827: And saturnine ; her port erect, her head

Not absolutely raised, as if to hold MS., 1814-20

681 Save only that the head, the Citadel

And watchtower of the meditative mind

Stooped and projected firmly as she walked MS.

For ever musing. Sunken were her eyes ;  
 Wrinkled and furrowed with habitual thought  
 Was her broad forehead ; like the brow of one  
 Whose visual nerve shrinks from a painful glare 685  
 Of overpowering light.—While yet a child,  
 She, 'mid the humble flowerets of the vale,  
 Towered like the imperial thistle, not unfurnished  
 With its appropriate grace, yet rather seeking  
 To be admired, than coveted and loved. 690  
 Even at that age she ruled, a sovereign queen,  
 Over her comrades ; else their simple sports,  
 Wanting all relish for her strenuous mind,  
 Had crossed her only to be shunned with scorn.  
 —Oh ! pang of sorrowful regret for those 695  
 Whom, in their youth, sweet study has enthralled,  
 That they have lived for harsher servitude,  
 Whether in soul, in body, or estate !  
 Such doom was hers ; yet nothing could subdue  
 Her keen desire of knowledge, nor efface 700  
 Those brighter images by books imprest  
 Upon her memory, faithfully as stars  
 That occupy their places, and, though oft  
 Hidden by clouds, and oft bedimmed by haze,  
 Are not to be extinguished, nor impaired. 705

“Two passions, both degenerate, for they both  
 Began in honour, gradually obtained  
 Rule over her, and vexed her daily life ;

683–4 Her ample forehead by habitual thought

Furrowed and wrinkled MS.

689 seeking 1827: framed MS., 1814–20 691 ruled, a 1832:  
 ruled as MS., 1814–27 692 so 1832: Among her Playmates etc.  
 1814–20: 'Mid her companions 1827: Among her comrades yet was she  
 herself MS.

693–4 so 1827: Had wanted power to occupy a mind

Held in subjection by a strong controul

Of studious application, self-imposed.

Books were her creditors ; to them she paid,

With pleasing, anxious eagerness, the hours

Which they exacted ; were it time allowed,

Or seized upon by stealth, or fairly won,

By stretch of industry, from other tasks. 1814–20, so

MS., but without first line, and In turn subjected for Held in subjection

695 those 1827: them MS., 1814–20 700 nor 1827: or MS.,

1814–20 705 nor 1832: or MS., 1814–27

An unremitting, avaricious thrift;  
 And a strange thralldom of maternal love, 710  
 That held her spirit, in its own despite,  
 Bound—by vexation, and regret, and scorn,  
 Constrained forgiveness, and relenting vows,  
 And tears, in pride suppressed, in shame concealed—  
 To a poor dissolute Son, her only child. 715  
 —Her wedded days had opened with mishap,  
 Whence dire dependence. What could she perform  
 To shake the burthen off? Ah! there was felt,  
 Indignantly, the weakness of her sex.  
 She mused, resolved, adhered to her resolve; 720  
 The hand grew slack in alms-giving, the heart  
 Closed by degrees to charity; heaven's blessing  
 Not seeking from that source, she placed her trust  
 In ceaseless pains—and strictest parsimony  
 Which sternly hoarded all that could be spared, 725  
 From each day's need, out of each day's least gain.

“Thus all was re-established, and a pile  
 Constructed, that sufficed for every end,  
 Save the contentment of the builder's mind;  
 A mind by nature indisposed to aught 730  
 So placid, so inactive, as content;  
 A mind intolerant of lasting peace,  
 And cherishing the pang her heart deplored.  
 Dread life of conflict! which I oft compared  
 To the agitation of a brook that runs 735  
 Down a rocky mountain, buried now and lost

709 unremitting 1837: unrelenting MS., 1814–32 710 bondage *corr.*  
 to passion *corr.* to thralldom MS.

712–13 Bound by forgiveness and by tender thought,  
 Mortification and regret and scorn, MS.

720–3 so 1827: The injustice of her low estate.—She mused;  
 Resolved, adhered to her resolve; her heart  
 Closed by degrees to charity; and, thence  
 Expecting not Heaven's blessing, placed her trust MS.,

1814–20, but MS. God's for Heaven's

724–6 so 1837: . . . parsimonious care  
 Which got, and sternly hoarded each day's gain. MS.,  
 1814–32

733 her heart 1837: that it MS.: which it 1814–32 734 Dread]  
 A MS. 736 so 1837: . . . rocky mountains MS., 1814–32

In silent pools, now in strong eddies chained;  
 But never to be charmed to gentleness:  
 Its best attainment fits of such repose  
 As timid eyes might shrink from fathoming. 740

"A sudden illness seized her in the strength  
 Of life's autumnal season.—Shall I tell  
 How on her bed of death the Matron lay,  
 To Providence submissive, so she thought;  
 But fretted, vexed, and wrought upon, almost 745  
 To anger, by the malady that griped  
 Her prostrate frame with unrelaxing power,  
 As the fierce eagle fastens on the lamb?  
 She prayed, she moaned;—her husband's sister watched  
 Her dreary pillow, waited on her needs; 750  
 And yet the very sound of that kind foot  
 Was anguish to her ears! 'And must she rule,'  
 This was the death-doomed Woman heard to say  
 In bitterness, 'and must she rule and reign,  
 Sole Mistress of this house, when I am gone? 755  
 Tend what I tended, calling it her own!'  
 Enough;—I fear, too much.—One vernal evening,  
 While she was yet in prime of health and strength,  
 I well remember, while I passed her door  
 Alone, with loitering step, and upward eye 760  
 Turned towards the planet Jupiter that hung  
 Above the centre of the Vale, a voice  
 Roused me, her voice; it said, 'That glorious star  
 In its untroubled element will shine  
 As now it shines, when we are laid in earth 765  
 And safe from all our sorrows.' With a sigh

737 so 1832: . . . unfathomably deep MS., 1814-20: and now in eddies chained 1827

738-40 so 1827: Now, in a moment, starting forth again

With violence, and proud of its escape;—

Until it sink once more, by slow degrees,

Or instantly, into as dark [deep MS.] repose. MS., 1814-20

753 death-doomed 1845: dying MS., 1814-43: suffering C 755/6

Sit by my fire—possess what I possessed— MS., 1814-43 757 so

1827: . . . much. Of nobler feeling Take this example—One autumnal

evening MS., 1814-20 760 Alone 1845: Musing MS., 1814-43

761 Fixed on MS. 766-74 so 1845: And safe from all our sorrows."

She is safe MS., 1814-43

766-8

with that sigh

Mingled I question not sustaining faith

She spake, yet, I believe, not unsustained  
 By faith in glory that shall far transcend  
 Aught by these perishable heavens disclosed  
 To sight or mind. Nor less than care divine 770  
 Is divine mercy. She, who had rebelled,  
 Was into meekness softened and subdued;  
 Did, after trials not in vain prolonged,  
 With resignation sink into the grave;  
 And her uncharitable acts, I trust, 775  
 And harsh unkindnesses are all forgiven,  
 Tho', in this Vale, remembered with deep awe."

The Vicar paused; and toward a seat advanced,  
 A long stone-seat, fixed in the Churchyard wall;  
 Part shaded by cool sycamore, and part 780  
 Offering a sunny resting-place to them  
 Who seek the House of worship, while the bells  
 Yet ring with all their voices, or before  
 The last hath ceased its solitary knoll.  
 Beneath the shade we all sate down; and there 785  
 His office, uninvited, he resumed.

"As on a sunny bank, a tender lamb  
 Lurks in safe shelter from the winds of March,  
 Screened by its parent, so that little mound  
 Lies guarded by its neighbour; the small heap 790  
 Speaks for itself; an Infant there doth rest;

In revelation, for the immortal Soul  
 Guides unto glory that shall far transcend *etc.* C

770 care] love C

778-81 *so* 1827: The Vicar paused; and tow'rds a seat advanced,  
 A long stone-seat, framed in the Church-yard wall;  
 Part under shady sycamore, and part  
 Offering a place of rest in pleasant sunshine,  
 Even as may suit the comers old or young MS., 1814-20  
 (*but* MS. ceased *for* paused)

782 seek] reach MS.

785 Beneath 1837: Under 1827-32:

To this commodious resting-place he led;

Where, by his side, we all *etc.* MS., 1814-20

787 As on a greenhill slope MS.

789-90 Screen'd by its nursing parent, in such sort,  
 Even so, methinks, that little hillock lies  
 Protected by *etc.* MS.

The sheltering hillock is the Mother's grave.  
 If mild discourse, and manners that conferred  
 A natural dignity on humblest rank ;  
 If gladsome spirits, and benignant looks, 795  
 That for a face not beautiful did more  
 Than beauty for the fairest face can do ;  
 And if religious tenderness of heart,  
 Grieving for sin, and penitential tears  
 Shed when the clouds had gathered and distained 800  
 The spotless ether of a maiden life ;  
 If these may make a hallowed spot of earth  
 More holy in the sight of God or Man ;  
 Then, o'er that mould, a sanctity shall brood  
 Till the stars sicken at the day of doom. 805

"Ah! what a warning for a thoughtless man,  
 Could field or grove, could any spot of earth,  
 Show to his eye an image of the pangs  
 Which it hath witnessed ; render back an echo  
 Of the sad steps by which it hath been trod ! 810  
 There, by her innocent Baby's precious grave,  
 And on the very turf that roofs her own,  
 The Mother oft was seen to stand, or kneel  
 In the broad day, a weeping Magdalene.  
 Now she is not ; the swelling turf reports 815  
 Of the fresh shower, but of poor Ellen's tears  
 Is silent ; nor is any vestige left  
 Of the path worn by mournful tread of her  
 Who, at her heart's light bidding, once had moved

792-4 The Mother at its side in fearless peace ;

If natural manners, and discourse that gave

A genuine dignity to lowest rank MS.

804 O'er that mould 1827: on that mold 1814-20:

Then on this humble grave, upon that pair

Of humble graves *etc.* MS.

807 Where'er he might be found, could earth present,

Could any pleasant field or grove of earth MS.: Could field or grove  
or 1814-27

812 *so* 1845: Yea, doubtless, on the turf MS., 1814-43 816 Ellen's]  
Emma's MS., and *so throughout the story*

818-19 *so* 1827: Upon the pathway, of her mournful tread ;

Nor of that pace with which she once had moved MS.,  
1814-20

In virgin fearlessness, with step that seemed 820  
 Caught from the pressure of elastic turf  
 Upon the mountains gemmed with morning dew,  
 In the prime hour of sweetest scents and airs.  
 —Serious and thoughtful was her mind; and yet,  
 By reconcilment exquisite and rare, 825  
 The form, port, motions, of this Cottage-girl  
 Were such as might have quickened and inspired  
 A Titian's hand, addrest to picture forth  
 Oread or Dryad glancing through the shade  
 What time the hunter's earliest horn is heard 830  
 Startling the golden hills.

A wide-spread elm  
 Stands in our valley, named THE JOYFUL TREE;  
 From dateless usage which our peasants hold  
 Of giving welcome to the first of May  
 By dances round its trunk.—And if the sky 835  
 Permit, like honours, dance and song, are paid  
 To the Twelfth Night, beneath the frosty stars  
 Or the clear moon. The queen of these gay sports,  
 If not in beauty yet in sprightly air,  
 Was hapless Ellen.—No one touched the ground 840  
 So deftly, and the nicest maiden's locks  
 Less gracefully were braided;—but this praise,

820 with 1827: a MS., 1814–20 822 gemmed 1827: wet MS., 1814–20

830–1 so 1827: When first the Hunter's startling horn is heard  
 Upon the golden hills. A spreading Elm [Oak MS.] MS., 1814–20

832/3 An Elm [Oak MS.] distinguished by that festive name, MS., 1814–20  
 833 From ancient MS.

833–8 Time out of mind distinguished by that name  
 For from each nook of that sequester'd glen  
 Maiden and Youth, by annual custom, meet  
 At sunrise, and give welcome to the May  
 By dances round its trunk: and if the sky  
 Permit, like honours, dance and song are paid  
 To the Twelfth Night, beneath its gloomy depths  
 Of leafless boughs, twinkling with frosty stars,  
 Or on the shadow-chequered floor of moss  
 The revelry proceeds, what time the Tree  
 Is silver'd o'er with acceptable light  
 From the clear Moon. MS. draft i

840 hapless Ellen] Emma Dalton MS.

Methinks, would better suit another place.

"She loved, and fondly deemed herself beloved.  
 —The road is dim, the current unperceived, 845  
 The weakness painful and most pitiful,  
 By which a virtuous woman, in pure youth,  
 May be delivered to distress and shame.  
 Such fate was hers.—The last time Ellen danced,  
 Among her equals, round THE JOYFUL TREE, 850  
 She bore a secret burthen; and full soon  
 Was left to tremble for a breaking vow,—  
 Then, to bewail a sternly-broken vow,  
 Alone, within her widowed Mother's house.  
 It was the season of unfolding leaves, 855  
 Of days advancing toward their utmost length,  
 And small birds singing happily to mates  
 Happy as they. With spirit-saddening power  
 Winds pipe through fading woods; but those blithe notes  
 Strike the deserted to the heart; I speak 860  
 Of what I know, and what we feel within.  
 —Beside the cottage in which Ellen dwelt  
 Stands a tall ash-tree; to whose topmost twig  
 A thrush resorts, and annually chants,  
 At morn and evening from that naked perch, 865  
 While all the undergrove is thick with leaves,  
 A time-beguiling ditty, for delight  
 Of his fond partner, silent in the nest.  
 —'Ah why,' said Ellen, sighing to herself,  
 'Why do not words, and kiss, and solemn pledge, 870  
 And nature that is kind in woman's breast,  
 And reason that in man is wise and good,  
 And fear of him who is a righteous judge;  
 Why do not these prevail for human life,  
 To keep two hearts together, that began 875  
 Their spring-time with one love, and that have need

855-9 so 1837: It was the season sweet, of budding leaves,  
 Of days advancing tow'rds [tow'rd 1832] their utmost  
 length,  
 And small birds singing to their happy mates.  
 Wild is the music of the autumnal wind  
 Among the faded woods; but these blithe notes MS.,  
 1814-32

864 chants] sings MS.

871 that is] ever MS.

Of mutual pity and forgiveness, sweet  
 To grant, or be received; while that poor bird—  
 O come and hear him! Thou who hast to me  
 Been faithless, hear him, though a lowly creature, 880  
 One of God's simple children that yet know not  
 The universal Parent, how he sings  
 As if he wished the firmament of heaven  
 Should listen, and give back to him the voice  
 Of his triumphant constancy and love; 885  
 The proclamation that he makes, how far  
 His darkness doth transcend our fickle light!"

"Such was the tender passage, not by me  
 Repeated without loss of simple phrase,  
 Which I perused, even as the words had been 890  
 Committed by forsaken Ellen's hand  
 To the blank margin of a Valentine,  
 Bedropped with tears. 'Twill please you to be told  
 That, studiously withdrawing from the eye  
 Of all companionship, the Sufferer yet 895  
 In lonely reading found a meek resource:  
 How thankful for the warmth of summer days,  
 When she could slip into the cottage-barn,  
 And find a secret oratory there;  
 Or, in the garden, under friendly veil 900  
 Of their long twilight, pore upon her book  
 By the last lingering help of the open sky  
 Until dark night dismissed her to her bed!  
 Thus did a waking fancy sometimes lose  
 The unconquerable pang of despised love. 905

"A kindlier passion opened on her soul  
 When that poor Child was born. Upon its face  
 She gazed as on a pure and spotless gift  
 Of unexpected promise, where a grief

878 or to receive MS. 897 And she was thankful for the summer days MS.

898-901 so 1827: And their long twilight!—friendly to that stealth  
 With which she slipped into the Cottage-barn,  
 And found a secret oratory there;

Or, in the garden, pored upon her book MS., 1814-20  
 900 garden] Orchard MS. 902 the open 1845: open MS., 1814-43  
 903 Until 1845: Till the MS., 1814-43 908 gazed 1845: looked  
 MS., 1814-43

Or dread was all that had been thought of,—joy 910  
 Far livelier than bewildered traveller feels,  
 Amid a perilous waste that all night long  
 Hath harassed him toiling through fearful storm,  
 When he beholds the first pale speck serene  
 Of day-spring, in the gloomy east, revealed, 915  
 And greets it with thanksgiving. 'Till this hour,'  
 Thus, in her Mother's hearing Ellen spake,  
 'There was a stony region in my heart;  
 But He, at whose command the parchèd rock  
 Was smitten, and poured forth a quenching stream, 920  
 Hath softened that obduracy, and made  
 Unlooked-for gladness in the desert place,  
 To save the perishing; and, henceforth, I breathe  
 The air with cheerful spirit, for thy sake,  
 My Infant! and for that good Mother dear, 925  
 Who bore me; and hath prayed for me in vain;—  
 Yet not in vain; it shall not be in vain.'  
 She spake, nor was the assurance unfulfilled;  
 And if heart-rending thoughts would oft return,  
 They stayed not long.—The blameless Infant grew; 930  
 The Child whom Ellen and her Mother loved  
 They soon were proud of; tended it and nursed;  
 A soothing comforter, although forlorn;  
 Like a poor singing-bird from distant lands;  
 Or a choice shrub, which he, who passes by 935  
 With vacant mind, not seldom may observe  
 Fair-flowering in a thinly-peopled house,  
 Whose window, somewhat sadly, it adorns.

"Through four months' space the Infant drew its food  
 From the maternal breast; then scruples rose; 940  
 Thoughts, which the rich are free from, came and crossed  
 The fond affection. She no more could bear  
 By her offence to lay a twofold weight

911-13 livelier . . . that . . . Hath *etc.* 1827: sweeter . . . where . . .  
 Through darkness he hath toiled and *etc.* MS., 1814-20 919 parchèd]  
 barren MS. 923-4 *so* 1845 . . . look Upon the light with (in MS.)  
 cheerfulness, for thee. MS., 1814-43 925 Infant] Baby MS.

928-30 Then followed other workings; self-reproach  
 Grief for a human being born to shame,  
 And fatherless and friendless in the world.  
 What need of more? The *etc.* MS.

936 With mind at ease MS. 942 fond 1837: sweet MS., 1814-32

On a kind parent willing to forget  
 Their slender means: so, to that parent's care 945  
 Trusting her child, she left their common home,  
 And undertook with dutiful content  
 A Foster-mother's office.

'Tis, perchance,  
 Unknown to you that in these simple vales  
 The natural feeling of equality 950  
 Is by domestic service unimpaired;  
 Yet, though such service be, with us, removed  
 From sense of degradation, not the less  
 The ungentle mind can easily find means  
 To impose severe restraints and laws unjust, 955  
 Which hapless Ellen now was doomed to feel:  
 For (blinded by an over-anxious dread  
 Of such excitement and divided thought  
 As with her office would but ill accord)  
 The pair, whose infant she was bound to nurse, 960

945-51 How slender are their means. With this regard  
 She shrank not from a painful sacrifice,  
 And trusting to her Mother's care the Child,  
 For that occasion weaned from her own breast,  
 She left her home and cheerfully became  
 A Foster-parent in a neighbouring farm.  
 Perchance ye may not know, for 'tis, I think,  
 Peculiar to these simple vales, that here  
 Domestic service takes not from the mind  
 The natural feeling of equality.  
 No haughtiness the Master thence derives,  
 The servant no abasement. Youth and Man  
 Go forth, constrained or of free choice, and take  
 The hire of strangers or of nearest kin  
 Within their native or some neighbouring glen  
 Even as may chance. Meanwhile they see and learn,  
 Their eyes are quickened and their minds prepared  
 For future duties—process not unlike  
 To that of old (if the rude commonwealth  
 And its inglorious arts may be compared  
 To the proud world) when Youths of gentle blood,  
 Many of the noblest stock, were duly sent  
 To undertake the office of a Page  
 In house of Prelate or exalted Peer,  
 There to be disciplined in goodly *thewes*. MS.

947 so 1845: And with contented spirit undertook 1814-43

957-9 so 1827: In selfish blindness, for I will not say  
 In naked and deliberate cruelty, MS., 1814-20

Forbad her all communion with her own:  
 Week after week, the mandate they enforced.  
 —So near! yet not allowed upon that sight  
 To fix her eyes—alas! 'twas hard to bear!  
 But worse affliction must be borne—far worse; 965  
 For 'tis Heaven's will—that, after a disease  
 Begun and ended within three days' space,  
 Her child should die; as Ellen now exclaimed,  
 Her own—deserted child!—Once, only once,  
 She saw it in that mortal malady; 970  
 And, on the burial-day, could scarcely gain  
 Permission to attend its obsequies.  
 She reached the house, last of the funeral train;  
 And some one, as she entered, having chanced  
 To urge unthinkingly their prompt departure, 975  
 'Nay,' said she, with commanding look, a spirit  
 Of anger never seen in her before,  
 'Nay, ye must wait my time!' and down she sate,  
 And by the unclosed coffin kept her seat  
 Weeping and looking, looking on and weeping, 980  
 Upon the last sweet slumber of her Child,  
 Until at length her soul was satisfied.

"You see the Infant's Grave; and to this spot,  
 The Mother, oft as she was sent abroad,  
 On whatsoever errand, urged her steps: 985  
 Hither she came; here stood, and sometimes knelt  
 In the broad day, a rueful Magdalene!  
 So call her; for not only she bewailed  
 A mother's loss, but mourned in bitterness  
 Her own transgression; penitent sincere 990  
 As ever raised to heaven a streaming eye!  
 —At length the parents of the foster-child,  
 Noting that in despite of their commands  
 She still renewed and could not but renew  
 Those visitations, ceased to send her forth; 995  
 Or, to the garden's narrow bounds, confined.

961/2 They argued that such meeting would disturb  
 The Mother's mind, distract her thoughts, and thus  
 Unfit her for her duty [office MS.]—in which dread, MS., 1814–20  
 962 they 1827: was MS., 1814–20 985 On whatsoever 1837:  
 And whatsoe'er the MS., 1814–32 986 so 1832: and here she stood,  
 or knelt MS., 1814–27  
 995/6 And she remained a prisoner: to the house MS.

I failed not to remind them that they erred ;  
 For holy Nature might not thus be crossed,  
 Thus wronged in woman's breast : in vain I pleaded—  
 But the green stalk of Ellen's life was snapped, 1000  
 And the flower drooped ; as every eye could see,  
 It hung its head in mortal languishment.  
 —Aided by this appearance, I at length  
 Prevailed ; and, from those bonds released, she went  
 Home to her mother's house.

The Youth was fled ; 1005

The rash betrayer could not face the shame  
 Or sorrow which his senseless guilt had caused ;  
 And little would his presence, or proof given  
 Of a relenting soul, have now availed ;  
 For, like a shadow, he was passed away 1010  
 From Ellen's thoughts ; had perished to her mind  
 For all concerns of fear, or hope, or love,  
 Save only those which to their common shame,  
 And to his moral being appertained :  
 Hope from that quarter would, I know, have brought 1015  
 A heavenly comfort ; there she recognised  
 An unrelaxing bond, a mutual need ;  
 There, and, as seemed, there only.

She had built,

Her fond maternal heart had built, a nest  
 In blindness all too near the river's edge ; 1020  
 That work a summer flood with hasty swell  
 Had swept away ; and now her Spirit longed  
 For its last flight to heaven's security.  
 —The bodily frame wasted from day to day ;  
 Meanwhile, relinquishing all other cares, 1025  
 Her mind she strictly tutored to find peace  
 And pleasure in endurance. Much she thought,  
 And much she read ; and brooded feelingly  
 Upon her own unworthiness. To me,

997 When this was known by me I did not fail  
 To admonish and remind *etc.* MS.

1018 built 1827: raised MS., 1814-20

1021-2 That dear abiding-place of tranquil thought  
 Of binding duties and of tender cares  
 A hasty summer flood had swept away  
 And thus deprived her homeless Spirit . . . MS.

1024 *so* 1845: was wasted day by day MS., 1814-43

As to a spiritual comforter and friend, 1030  
 Her heart she opened ; and no pains were spared  
 To mitigate, as gently as I could,  
 The sting of self-reproach, with healing words.  
 Meek Saint ! through patience glorified on earth !  
 In whom, as by her lonely hearth she sate, 1035  
 The ghastly face of cold decay put on  
 A sun-like beauty, and appeared divine !  
 May I not mention—that, within those walls,  
 In due observance of her pious wish,  
 The congregation joined with me in prayer 1040  
 For her soul's good ? Nor was that office vain.  
 —Much did she suffer : but, if any friend,  
 Beholding her condition, at the sight  
 Give way to words of pity or complaint,  
 She stilled them with a prompt reproof, and said, 1045  
 'He who afflicts me knows what I can bear ;  
 And, when I fail, and can endure no more,  
 Will mercifully take me to himself.'  
 So, through the cloud of death, her Spirit passed  
 Into that pure and unknown world of love 1050  
 Where injury cannot come :—and here is laid  
 The mortal Body by her Infant's side."

The Vicar ceased ; and downcast looks made known  
 That each had listened with his inmost heart.  
 For me, the emotion scarcely was less strong 1055  
 Or less benign than that which I had felt  
 When seated near my venerable Friend,  
 Under those shady elms, from him I heard  
 The story that retraced the slow decline  
 Of Margaret, sinking on the lonely heath 1060  
 With the neglected house to which she clung.  
 —I noted that the Solitary's cheek  
 Confessed the power of nature.—Pleased though sad,

1038 those 1827: these MS., 1814–20 1038–9 . . . at her desire,  
 Her pious wish within these holy walls MS.

1053 . . . nor did his audience fail

To shew by silence and by downcast looks MS.

1057–8 Two days before when, seated with my Friend, Beneath *etc.* MS.

1058 Under 1845: Beneath 1814–43 1061 *so* 1827: . . . house in  
 which she dwelt MS., 1814–20

More pleased than sad, the grey-haired Wanderer sate;  
 Thanks to his pure imaginative soul 1065  
 Capacious and serene; his blameless life,  
 His knowledge, wisdom, love of truth, and love  
 Of human kind! He was it who first broke  
 The pensive silence, saying:—

“Blest are they  
 Whose sorrow rather is to suffer wrong 1070  
 Than to do wrong, albeit themselves have erred.  
 This tale gives proof that Heaven most gently deals  
 With such, in their affliction.—Ellen’s fate,  
 Her tender spirit, and her contrite heart,  
 Call to my mind dark hints which I have heard 1075  
 Of one who died within this vale, by doom  
 Heavier, as his offence was heavier far.  
 Where, Sir, I pray you, where are laid the bones  
 Of Wilfred Armathwaite?”

The Vicar answered,  
 “In that green nook, close by the Churchyard wall, 1080  
 Beneath yon hawthorn, planted by myself  
 In memory and for warning, and in sign  
 Of sweetness where dire anguish had been known,  
 Of reconciliation after deep offence—  
 There doth he rest. No theme his fate supplies 1085

1064 Wanderer] Pedlar MS. 1071 albeit 1837: although MS., 1814–32  
 1085–6 There doth he lie—In this his native Vale

He owned and tilled a little plot of land;  
 Here with his Consort *etc.* as MS. *infra*, 1814–20

1085–93 *so* 1827:

Yon Cottage, would that it could tell a part  
 Of its own story. Thousands might give ear,  
 Might hear it, and blush deep. These few years past  
 In this his native Valley, dwelt a Man,  
 The Master of a little plot of ground  
 A Man of mild deportment and discourse  
 A scholar also (as the phrase is here)  
 For he drew much delight from these few books  
 That lay within his reach and for this cause  
 Was by his Fellow-dalesmen honoured more,  
 A Shepherd and a Tiller of the ground  
 Studious withal, and healthy in his frame  
 Of body, and of just and placid mind.  
 He with his Consort and his Children, saw  
 Days that were seldom crossed by petty strife  
 Years safe from large misfortune; long (and 1814–20) maintained

For the smooth glozings of the indulgent world ;  
 Nor need the windings of his devious course  
 Be here retraced ;—enough that, by mishap  
 And venial error, robbed of competence,  
 And her obsequious shadow, peace of mind, 1090  
 He craved a substitute in troubled joy ;  
 Against his conscience rose in arms, and, braving  
 Divine displeasure, broke the marriage-vow.  
 That which he had been weak enough to do  
 Was misery in remembrance ; he was stung, 1095  
 Stung by his inward thoughts, and by the smiles  
 Of wife and children stung to agony.  
 Wretched at home, he gained no peace abroad ;

That cause which men the wisest and most pure (. . . minds, of insight not too keen, 1814–20)

Might look on with complacency. And yet (. . . with entire complacency. 1814–20)

Within himself and near him there were faults (Yet, in himself *etc.* 1814–20)

At work to undermine his happiness (. . . his happy state 1814–20)

By little and by little (By sure, though tardy progress. 1814–20) Active, prompt

And lively was the Housewife ; in the Vale

None more industrious ; but her industry

Was of that specious kind which tended more (Ill-judged, full oft, and specious 1814–20)

To splendid neatness, to a shewy, trim,

And over laboured purity of house ;

Than to substantial thrift. He, on his part,

Generous and easy-minded, was not free

From carelessness ; and there, in course (lapse 1814–20) of time

These joint infirmities, combined, perchance } infirmities induced decay

With other cause less obvious, brought decay } 1814–20

Of worldly substance ; and distress of mind,

Which to a thoughtful Man was hard to shun

And which he could not cure. A blooming Girl

Served them, an Inmate of the House. Alas !

(Served in the house, a Favourite that had grown

Beneath his eye, encouraged by his care. 1814–20)

Poor now in tranquil pleasure he gave way

To thoughts of troubled pleasure ; he became

A lawless Suitor to the Maid ; and she

Yielded unworthily. Unhappy Man ! MS1800, and 1814–20

1097/8 His temper urged him not to seek relief

Amid the noise of revellers, nor from draughts

Of lonely stupefaction, he himself

A rational and suffering Man, himself

Was his own world, without a resting-place. MS1800

Ranged through the mountains, slept upon the earth,  
 Asked comfort of the open air, and found 1100  
 No quiet in the darkness of the night,  
 No pleasure in the beauty of the day.  
 His flock he slighted: his paternal fields  
 Became a clog to him, whose spirit wished  
 To fly—but whither! And this gracious Church, 1105  
 That wears a look so full of peace and hope  
 And love, benignant mother of the vale,  
 How fair amid her brood of cottages!  
 She was to him a sickness and reproach.  
 Much to the last remained unknown: but this 1110  
 Is sure, that through remorse and grief he died;  
 Though pitied among men, absolved by God,  
 He could not find forgiveness in himself;  
 Nor could endure the weight of his own shame.

“Here rests a Mother. But from her I turn 1115  
 And from her grave.—Behold—upon that ridge,  
 That, stretching boldly from the mountain side,  
 Carries into the centre of the vale  
 Its rocks and woods—the Cottage where she dwelt;  
 And where yet dwells her faithful Partner, left 1120  
 (Full eight years past) the solitary prop  
 Of many helpless Children. I begin  
 With words that might be prelude to a tale  
 Of sorrow and dejection; but I feel  
 No sadness, when I think of what mine eyes 1125  
 See daily in that happy family.

1105 this] yon MS1800 1106 wears] has MS1800

1110-14 I speak conjecturing from the little-known  
 The much that to the last remain'd unknown,  
 But this is sure; he died of his own grief,  
 He could not bear the weight of his own shame. MS1800

1117-21 That ridge which elbowing from the mountain side  
 Carries into the Plain its rocks and woods,  
 Conceals a cottage where a Father dwells  
 In widowhood whose Life's Co-partner died  
 Long since, and left him solitary prop MS1800

1118-20 Carries into the plain its rocks and woods  
 Behold the Cottage where she dwelt, where now  
 Her husband dwells in widowhood, whom she left MS.

1124/5 Though in the midst of sadness, as might seem, MS1800

1126-8 Have seen in that delightful family.

—Bright garland make they for their Father's brows MS1800

—Bright garland form they for the pensive brow  
 Of their undrooping Father's widowhood,  
 Those six fair Daughters, budding yet—not one,  
 Not one of all the band, a full-blown flower. 1130  
 Deprest, and desolate of soul, as once  
 That Father was, and filled with anxious fear,  
 Now, by experience taught, he stands assured,  
 That God, who takes away, yet takes not half  
 Of what he seems to take; or gives it back, 1135  
 Not to our prayer, but far beyond our prayer;  
 He gives it—the boon produce of a soil  
 Which our endeavours have refused to till,  
 And hope hath never watered. The Abode,

1131-4 Go to the dwelling, there shall ye have proof  
 That He *etc.* MS1800

1139-42 . . . watered.—As the spot  
 Chosen for the Raven's nest—the nest itself  
 And all the unsightly spoil around it spread,  
 Proclaim the savage nature of the Bird  
 Which there inhabits, so that humble Lodge  
 In which that rustic family abides  
 Leaves not uncertain to a transient glance  
 That 'tis a covert of content and peace  
 And unreprieved enjoyment. Thither turn,  
 The antient Cottage (at such distance seen)  
 Appears in no distinction *etc.* MS.

1139-60 . . . watered. Ye shall see  
 A House which at small distance will appear  
 In no distinction to have passed beyond  
 Its Fellows, will appear, like them, to have grown  
 Out of the native rock, but nearer view  
 Will shew it not so grave in outward mien  
 And soberly array'd as for the most  
 Are those rude mountain-dwellings, Nature's care,  
 Mere friendless Nature's, but a studious work  
 Of many fancies, and of many hands  
 A plaything and a pride, for such the air  
 And aspect which the little Spot maintains,  
 In spite of lonely winter's nakedness.  
 They have their jasmine resting on the porch  
 Their rose trees, strong in health, that will be soon  
 Roof-high, and here and there the garden wall  
 Is topped with simple stones, a shewy pile  
 Curious for shape or hue, some round, like Balls  
 Worn smooth and round by fretting of the Brook  
 From which they have been gathered, others bright  
 And sparry, the rough scatterings of the hills.  
 These ornaments the cottage chiefly owes  
 To one, a hardy Girl, who mounts the rocks,

Whose grateful owner can attest these truths, 1140  
 Even were the object nearer to our sight,  
 Would seem in no distinction to surpass  
 The rudest habitations. Ye might think  
 That it had sprung self-raised from earth, or grown  
 Out of the living rock, to be adorned 1145  
 By nature only; but, if thither led,  
 Ye would discover, then, a studious work  
 Of many fancies, prompting many hands.

“Brought from the woods the honeysuckle twines  
 Around the porch, and seems, in that trim place, 1150  
 A plant no longer wild; the cultured rose  
 There blossoms, strong in health, and will be soon  
 Roof-high; the wild pink crowns the garden-wall,  
 And with the flowers are intermingled stones  
 Sparry and bright, rough scatterings of the hills. 1155  
 These ornaments, that fade not with the year,  
 A hardy Girl continues to provide;  
 Who, mounting fearlessly the rocky heights,  
 Her Father's prompt attendant, does for him  
 All that a boy could do, but with delight 1160  
 More keen and prouder daring; yet hath she,  
 Within the garden, like the rest, a bed  
 For her own flowers and favourite herbs, a space,  
 By sacred charter, holden for her use.

Such is her choice; she fears not the bleak wind;  
 Companion of her Father, does for him  
 Where'er he wanders in his pastoral course  
 The service of a Boy, and with delight MS1800  
 1164-76 Holden by sacred charter, and I guess  
 She also helped to frame that tiny plot  
 Of garden ground which one day 'twas my chance  
 To find among the woody rocks that rise  
 Above the House, a slip of smoother earth  
 Planted with gooseberry bushes, and in one,  
 Right in the centre of the prickly shrub,  
 A mimic bird-nest, fashion'd by the hand,  
 Was stuck, a staring thing of twisted hay,  
 And one quaint Fir-tree tower'd above the whole.  
 But in the darkness of the night, then most  
 This Dwelling charms me, covered by the gloom;  
 Then, heedless of good manners, I stop short,  
 And (who could help it?) feed etc. MS1800  
 1164-76 Holden by sacred charter. Thither go

—These, and whatever else the garden bears 1165  
 Of fruit or flower, permission asked or not,  
 I freely gather; and my leisure draws  
 A not unfrequent pastime from the hum  
 Of bees around their range of sheltered hives  
 Busy in that enclosure; while the rill, 1170  
 That sparkling thrids the rocks, attunes his voice  
 To the pure course of human life which there  
 Flows on in solitude. But, when the gloom  
 Of night is falling round my steps, then most  
 This Dwelling charms me; often I stop short, 1175  
 (Who could refrain?) and feed by stealth my sight  
 With prospect of the company within,  
 Laid open through the blazing window:—there  
 I see the eldest Daughter at her wheel  
 Spinning amain, as if to overtake 1180  
 The never-halting time; or, in her turn,  
 Teaching some Novice of the sisterhood  
 That skill in this or other household work,  
 Which, from her Father's honoured hand, herself,  
 While she was yet a little-one, had learned. 1185  
 Mild Man! he is not gay, but they are gay;  
 And the whole house seems filled with gaiety.

And the trim outside of this low abode  
 Will please you more than sight of lordliest dome,  
 Or choicest work of nature mid these hills  
 Embosomed, lake, or headlong waterfall,  
 In quest of which the Traveller comes from far.  
 For 'tis a little volume to all eyes  
 Laid open, a fair picture; among trees  
 The Cottage stands, hard by a plenteous stream  
 That sparkling thrids the rocks, and tunes its voice  
 To the pure course of human life which there  
 Flows on in solitude from year to year.  
 But at the closing-in of night, then most  
 This Dwelling charms me, covered by the gloom,  
 Then, in my walks, I oftentimes stop short,  
 (Who could refrain?) and feed *etc.* MS.

1168–70 so 1845:

. . . from the sight

Of the Bees murmuring round their sheltered hives

In that Enclosure; while the mountain rill, 1814–43

1173–6 so 1827: 1814–20 as last 4 lines of MS. *supra*

1187/8 Now have ye not received good recompense

For that distressful tale which last I told?

These fruits (so God, the poor man's Friend ordains)

Shall deck the board of innocence and love

—Thrice happy, then, the Mother may be deemed,  
 The Wife, from whose consolatory grave  
 I turned, that ye in mind might witness where, 1190  
 And how, her Spirit yet survives on earth!"

MS., 1814-20 *add the following lines, omitted in later editions :*

The next three Ridges—those upon the left—  
 By close connexion with our present thoughts  
 Tempt me to add, in praise of humble worth,  
 Their brief and unobtrusive history. 1195

—One Hillock, ye may note, is small and low,  
 Sunk almost to a level with the plain  
 By weight of time ; the Others, undepressed,  
 Are bold and swelling. There a Husband sleeps,  
 Deposited, in pious confidence 1200

Of glorious resurrection with the just,  
 Near the loved Partner of his early days ;  
 And, in the bosom of that family mold,  
 A second Wife is gathered to his side ;  
 The approved Assistant of an arduous course 1205

From his mid noon of manhood to old age !  
 He also of his Mate deprived, was left  
 Alone—'mid many Children : One a Babe  
 Orphaned as soon as born. Alas ! 'tis not  
 In course of nature that a Father's wing 1210

Should warm these Little-ones ; and can he feed ?  
 That was a thought of agony more keen.  
 For, hand in hand with Death, by strange mishap  
 And chance-encounter on their diverse road,  
 The ghastlier shape of Poverty had entered 1215

Into that House, unfeared and unforeseen.  
 He had stepped forth, in time of urgent need,  
 The generous Surety of a Friend : and now

Where œconomic wisdom doth not fail,  
 Within doors or without, such the reward  
 Of conjugal fidelity through life

And partnership when Death has interfered MS.

1189 so 1832: The Wife, who rests beneath that turf, from which MS.,  
 1814-27 1195 unobtrusive] uneventful MS. 1205 Associate  
 MS.

1207-8 He too was left the solitary prop  
 Of many helpless Children MS.

1209 born. Alas] born. His life's dear help Is taken from him, and alas  
 MS.

1217-18 His generous mind had urged him to stand forth  
 In surety for a Brother, who, I fear,  
 Ill merited such proof of love, and now MS.

The widowed Father found that all his rights  
 In his paternal fields were undermined. 1220  
 Landless he was and pennyless.—The dews  
 Of night and morn that wet the mountain sides,  
 The bright stars twinkling on their dusky tops,  
 Were conscious of the pain that drove him forth  
 From his own door, he knew not when—to range 1225  
 He knew not where; distracted was his brain,  
 His heart was cloven; and full oft he prayed,  
 In blind despair, that God would take them all.  
 —But suddenly, as if in one kind moment  
 To encourage and reprove, a gleam of light 1230  
 Broke from the very bosom of that cloud  
 Which darkened the whole prospect of his days.  
 For He who now possessed the joyless right  
 To force the Bondsman from his house and lands,  
 In pity, and by admiration urged 1235  
 Of his un murmuring and considerate mind  
 Meekly submissive to the law's decree,  
 Lightened the penalty with liberal hand.  
 —The desolate Father raised his head and looked  
 On the wide world in hope. Within these walls, 1240  
 In course of time was solemnized the vow  
 Whereby a virtuous Woman, of grave years  
 And of prudential habits, undertook  
 The sacred office of a wife to him,  
 Of Mother to his helpless family. 1245

1221-6

These hills,

The dews of night and morn that wet their sides,  
 The solitary stars upon their tops,  
 Were conscious of his anguish, for he left  
 His hopeless door to range, he knew not where,  
 He knew not when MS.

1229 But with a sudden burst, as if at once MS. 1235 urged]  
 stirred MS. 1236 his] that

1237-8 With which the Sufferer shewed himself prepared  
 For prompt obedience to the voice of law,  
 Remitted, in free grace, a weighty sum  
 The fifth part of the total penalty.  
 At this forbearance shewn, this kindness done MS.

1240-3 . . . hope. Few words may serve  
 To tell the rest. With calm prudential choice  
 He made his suit to one who in his House  
 Had served, and tended now his new-born Babe,  
 A Matron of grave years. To her he sued.  
 Within these walls were solemnized the rites  
 By which the virtuous Woman undertook MS.

—Nor did she fail, in nothing did she fail,  
 Through various exercise of twice ten years,  
 Save in some partial fondness for that Child  
 Which at the birth she had received, the Babe  
 Whose heart had known no Mother but herself. 1250  
 —By mutual efforts ; by united hopes ;  
 By daily-growing help of boy and girl,  
 Trained early to participate that zeal  
 Of industry, which runs before the day  
 And lingers after it ; by strong restraint 1255  
 Of an economy which did not check  
 The heart's more generous motions tow'rd's themselves  
 Or to their neighbours ; and by trust in God ;  
 This Pair insensibly subdued the fears  
 And troubles that beset their life: and thus 1260  
 Did the good Father and his second Mate  
 Redeem at length their plot of smiling fields.  
 These, at this day, the eldest Son retains:  
 The younger Offspring, through the busy world,  
 Have all been scattered wide, by various fates ; 1265  
 But each departed from the native Vale,  
 In beauty flourishing, and moral worth."

1247 twice ten] twenty MS. 1256 Of prudence which, however,  
 MS. 1261 the good Father] Gawain Loveredge MS. 1264-5  
 The rest are scattered wide by various fates. MS. 1266 the] their  
 MS.

# BOOK SEVENTH

## THE CHURCHYARD AMONG THE MOUNTAINS (*continued*)

### ARGUMENT

Impression of these Narratives upon the Author's mind.—Pastor invited to give account of certain Graves that lie apart.—Clergyman and his Family.—Fortunate influence of change of situation.—Activity in extreme old age.—Another Clergyman, a character of resolute Virtue.—Lamentations over mis-directed applause.—Instance of less exalted excellence in a deaf man.—Elevated character of a blind man.—Reflection upon Blindness.—Interrupted by a Peasant who passes—his animal cheerfulness and careless vivacity.—He occasions a digression on the fall of beautiful and interesting Trees.—A female Infant's Grave.—Joy at her Birth.—Sorrow at her Departure.—A youthful Peasant—his patriotic enthusiasm and distinguished qualities—his<sup>1</sup> untimely death.—Exultation of the Wanderer, as a patriot, in this Picture.—Solitary how affected.—Monument of a Knight.—Traditions concerning him.—Peroration of the Wanderer on the transitoriness of things and the revolutions of society.—Hints at his own past Calling.—Thanks the Pastor.

WHILE thus from theme to theme the Historian passed,  
The words he uttered, and the scene that lay  
Before our eyes, awakened in my mind  
Vivid remembrance of those long-past hours;  
When, in the hollow of some shadowy vale,

5

<sup>1</sup> *so* 1837: his patriotic enthusiasm—distinguished qualities—and 1814–32

1–9 Once more did looks of pleasure and of praise  
Or words express our thanks. And for myself  
I said "Your promise, Sir, so kindly given  
Hath been, in truth, most movingly fulfilled.  
Oft in the quiet (stillness) of a green recess  
Lonesome and deep, beneath the craggy top  
Of Cader *etc.*  
My very soul hath listened with delight MS. *corr. to*  
Once more with *etc.*  
Or speech of no unmeaning (uncertain) courtesy,  
To him from whose pure lips these truths had flowed  
We all expressed our thanks, *etc. to* fulfilled  
The words which you have uttered, and the scene  
Before our eyes awakens in my mind  
A lively (pleasant) recollection of those hours  
When in the quiet *etc.*

5–7 When in a vale whose depth the setting sun  
Had ceased to illuminate, though yet his beams  
Lay beautiful on Snowdon's craggy top MS.

(What time the splendour of the setting sun  
 Lay beautiful on Snowdon's sovereign brow,  
 On Cader Idris, or huge Penmanmaur)  
 A wandering Youth, I listened with delight  
 To pastoral melody or warlike air, 10  
 Drawn from the chords of the ancient British harp  
 By some accomplished Master, while he sate  
 Amid the quiet of the green recess,  
 And there did inexhaustibly dispense  
 An interchange of soft or solemn tunes, 15  
 Tender or blithe; now, as the varying mood  
 Of his own spirit urged,—now, as a voice  
 From youth or maiden, or some honoured chief  
 Of his compatriot villagers (that hung  
 Around him, drinking in the impassioned notes 20  
 Of the time-hallowed minstrelsy) required  
 For their heart's ease or pleasure. Strains of power  
 Were they, to seize and occupy the sense;  
 But to a higher mark than song can reach  
 Rose this pure eloquence. And, when the stream 25  
 Which overflowed the soul was passed away,  
 A consciousness remained that it had left,  
 Deposited upon the silent shore  
 Of memory, images and precious thoughts,  
 That shall not die, and cannot be destroyed. 30

"These grassy heaps lie amicably close,"  
 Said I, "like surges heaving in the wind

7 sovereign brow 1827: craggy top 1814-20

14-15 Dispensing an unwearied interchange  
 Of soft or solemn tunes, severe or grave MS., *corr. to*  
 And inexhaustibly, as bird that sings  
 In leafy bower, an interchange dispensed  
 Of soft *etc.*

20-1 drinking in the festal flood Of his MS.

22-7 Sweet those strains  
 But yours are sweeter far; for, while they move,  
 They teach, and when that overflowing stream  
 Is passed away I feel that it hath left MS.

31-3 Did you not say that three contiguous vales  
 Do each possess within this hallow'd ground  
 Its own Compartment? Yet, from side to side  
 Save in the vacant corner of the North  
 The grassy heaps rise (lie) amicably close  
 Like surges heaving in a gentle wind  
 On the small surface *etc.* MS.

Along the surface of a mountain pool:  
 Whence comes it, then, that yonder we behold  
 Five graves, and only five, that rise together 35  
 Unsociably sequestered, and encroaching  
 On the smooth play-ground of the village-school?"

The Vicar answered,—“No disdainful pride  
 In them who rest beneath, nor any course  
 Of strange or tragic accident, hath helped 40  
 To place those hillocks in that lonely guise.  
 —Once more look forth, and follow with your sight  
 The length of road that from yon mountain’s base  
 Through bare enclosures stretches, ’till its line  
 Is lost within a little tuft of trees; 45  
 Then, reappearing in a moment, quits  
 The cultured fields; and up the heathy waste,  
 Mounts, as you see, in mazes serpentine,  
 Led towards an easy outlet of the vale.  
 That little shady spot, that sylvan tuft, 50  
 By which the road is hidden, also hides  
 A cottage from our view; though I discern  
 (Ye scarcely can) amid its sheltering trees  
 The smokeless chimney-top.—

All unembowered

And naked stood that lowly Parsonage 55  
 (For such in truth it is, and appertains  
 To a small Chapel in the vale beyond)  
 When hither came its last Inhabitant.  
 Rough and forbidding were the choicest roads  
 By which our northern wilds could then be crossed; 60  
 And into most of these secluded vales

33 Along 1837: Upon 1814–32 34 we] I MS.

35–6 so 1827: that lie apart,

Unsociable company and sad;

And, furthermore, appearing to encroach MS., 1814–20

42 sight 1827: eyes MS., 1814–20 43 that 1827: which MS.,

1814–20 45 within 1827: amid MS.: among 1814–20

46–8 Then, reappearing, quits the cultured fields

And through the heath-empurpled waste ascends

Towards yon easy *etc.* MS.

49 Led towards 1837: Towards MS., 1814–32

52–3 The body of a cottage from our view,

And seated here we scarcely can discern MS.,

Was no access for wain, heavy or light.  
 So, at his dwelling-place the Priest arrived  
 With store of household goods, in panniers slung  
 On sturdy horses graced with jingling bells, 65  
 And on the back of more ignoble beast;  
 That, with like burthen of effects most prized  
 Or easiest carried, closed the motley train.  
 Young was I then, a schoolboy of eight years;  
 But still, methinks, I see them as they passed 70  
 In order, drawing toward their wished-for home.  
 —Rocked by the motion of a trusty ass  
 Two ruddy children hung, a well-poised freight,  
 Each in his basket nodding drowsily;  
 Their bonnets, I remember, wreathed with flowers, 75  
 Which told it was the pleasant month of June;  
 And, close behind, the comely Matron rode,  
 A woman of soft speech and gracious smile,  
 And with a lady's mien.—From far they came,  
 Even from Northumbrian hills; yet theirs had been 80  
 A merry journey, rich in pastime, cheered  
 By music, prank, and laughter-stirring jest;  
 And freak put on, and arch word dropped—to swell  
 The cloud of fancy and uncouth surmise

62 Access was rare MS. 71 toward 1837: tow'rds 1814–20:  
tow'rd 1832

72–4 Each in his several pannier, in the pack  
Of a stout ass the rosy children hung MS.

76 it was 1827: that 'twas MS., 1814–20 77 Matron] Mother  
MS. 81–2 . . . wanting no delight Of gamesome prank or MS.

83–110 Or freak put on, a dark word dropped, to raise  
Uncouth surmises in the curious mind  
Of Boor or Burgher as they passed along.  
Whence do they come? upon what errand bent?  
And of what calling? Drugs have they to vend,  
Or will they act the Children of the Wood  
At the next village? Hearing this, you guess  
That in their sage migration all the band  
Priest, wife, and servants smiled or laughed with joy;  
Of which adventures oft the pair would tell  
With undiminished etc. MS. (draft i); draft ii, ll. 91–2 as text followed  
by

And oftimes earnest questions of like drift  
 By traveller halting in his own despite  
 Were boldly put to them, whereat ye guess  
 That etc. as (i) but grave for sage

That gathered round the slowly-moving train. 85  
 —‘Whence do they come ? and with what errand charged ?  
 Belong they to the fortune-telling tribe  
 Who pitch their tents under the green-wood tree ?  
 Or Strollers are they, furnished to enact  
 Fair Rosamond, and the Children of the Wood, 90  
 And, by that whiskered tabby’s aid, set forth  
 The lucky venture of sage Whittington,  
 When the next village hears the show announced  
 By blast of trumpet ?’ Plenteous was the growth  
 Of such conjectures, overheard, or seen 95  
 On many a staring countenance portrayed  
 Of boor or burgher, as they marched along.  
 And more than once their steadiness of face  
 Was put to proof, and exercise supplied  
 To their inventive humour, by stern looks, 100  
 And questions in authoritative tone,  
 From some staid guardian of the public peace,  
 Checking the sober steed on which he rode,  
 In his suspicious wisdom ; oftener still,  
 By notice indirect, or blunt demand 105  
 From traveller halting in his own despite,  
 A simple curiosity to ease :  
 Of which adventures, that beguiled and cheered  
 Their grave migration, the good pair would tell,  
 With undiminished glee, in hoary age. 110

“A Priest he was by function ; but his course  
 From his youth up, and high as manhood’s noon,  
 (The hour of life to which he then was brought)  
 Had been irregular, I might say, wild ;  
 By books unsteadied, by his pastoral care 115  
 Too little checked. An active, ardent mind ;  
 A fancy pregnant with resource and scheme  
 To cheat the sadness of a rainy day ;  
 Hands apt for all ingenious arts and games ;  
 A generous spirit, and a body strong 120  
 To cope with stoutest champions of the bowl ;  
 Had earned for him sure welcome, and the rights  
 Of a prized visitant, in the jolly hall

Of country 'squire ; or at the statelier board  
 Of duke or earl, from scenes of courtly pomp 125  
 Withdrawn,—to while away the summer hours  
 In condescension among rural guests.

"With these high comrades he had revelled long,  
 Frolicked industriously, a simple Clerk  
 By hopes of coming patronage beguiled 130  
 Till the heart sickened. So, each loftier aim  
 Abandoning and all his showy friends,  
 For a life's stay (slender it was, but sure)  
 He turned to this secluded chapelry ;  
 That had been offered to his doubtful choice 135  
 By an unthought-of patron. Bleak and bare  
 They found the cottage, their allotted home ;  
 Naked without, and rude within ; a spot  
 With which the Cure not long had been endowed :  
 And far remote the chapel stood,—remote, 140  
 And, from his Dwelling, unapproachable.  
 Save through a gap high in the hills, an opening  
 Shadeless and shelterless, by driving showers  
 Frequented, and beset with howling winds.  
 Yet cause was none, whate'er regret might hang 145  
 On his own mind, to quarrel with the choice  
 Or the necessity that fixed him here ;  
 Apart from old temptations, and constrained  
 To punctual labour in his sacred charge.  
 See him a constant preacher to the poor ! 150  
 And visiting, though not with saintly zeal,

126 . . . to pass the vacant summer hours MS. 129 *so* 1827: Had

frolicked many a year MS., 1814-20

131-4 *so* 1837: *and so* 1827 *but l.* 133 *as* 1814-20:

And vexed, until the weary heart grew sick

And so, abandoning each higher aim

And all his shewy Friends, at length he turned

For a life's stay, though slender yet assured,

To this remote and humble Chapelry ; 1814-20 *so* MS., *but l.* 131 all  
 higher aims *and l.* 133 For an assured though scanty livelihood.

136 By . . . patron] From . . . quarter MS.

139-44 *so* 1837: With which the scantily-provided Cure

Not long had been endowed ; and far remote

The Chapel stood, divided from that House

By an unpeopled tract of mountain waste. MS., 1814-32

147 Which fix'd him in this lonely solitude MS. 148/9 If not to

arduous labour, yet at least MS.

Yet, when need was, with no reluctant will,  
 The sick in body, or distress in mind ;  
 And, by as salutary change, compelled  
 To rise from timely sleep, and meet the day 155  
 With no engagement, in his thoughts, more proud  
 Or splendid than his garden could afford,  
 His fields, or mountains by the heath-cock ranged,  
 Or the wild brooks ; from which he now returned  
 Contented to partake the quiet meal 160  
 Of his own board, where sat his gentle Mate  
 And three fair Children, plentifully fed  
 Though simply, from their little household farm ;  
 Nor wanted timely treat of fish or fowl  
 By nature yielded to his practised hand ;— 165  
 To help the small but certain comings-in  
 Of that spare benefice. Yet not the less  
 Theirs was a hospitable board, and theirs  
 A charitable door.

So days and years  
 Passed on ;—the inside of that rugged house 170  
 Was trimmed and brightened by the Matron's care,  
 And gradually enriched with things of price,  
 Which might be lacked for use or ornament.  
 What, though no soft and costly sofa there  
 Insidiously stretched out its lazy length, 175  
 And no vain mirror glittered upon the walls,  
 Yet were the windows of the low abode  
 By shutters weather-fenced, which at once  
 Repelled the storm and deadened its loud roar.  
 Their snow-white curtains hung in decent folds ; 180  
 Tough moss, and long-enduring mountain-plants,  
 That creep along the ground with sinuous trail,  
 Were nicely braided ; and composed a work  
 Like Indian mats, that with appropriate grace

154/5 Month after month, in that obscure Abode MS., 1814-20 157/8  
 To an industrious and a lonely spade MS. 159 Or the 1827: Or  
 these MS., 1814-20 160-1 so 1827: Contentedly, to take a temperate  
 meal At MS., 1814-20 164 so 1837: With acceptable treat MS.,  
 1814-32 165/8 In hours of eager sport by these supplied MS.  
 176 upon 1845: on MS., 1814-43 180 decent] plenteous MS.  
 181-4 And long-enduring mountain plants that creep  
 Close to the ground with thick and sinuous trail,  
 In sign of neatness, with appropriate grace MS.

Lay at the threshold and the inner doors ; 185  
 And a fair carpet, woven of homespun wool  
 But tintured daintily with florid hues,  
 For seemliness and warmth, on festal days,  
 Covered the smooth blue slabs of mountain-stone  
 With which the parlour-floor, in simplest guise 190  
 Of pastoral homesteads, had been long inlaid.

“Those pleasing works the Housewife’s skill produced :  
 Meanwhile the unsedentary Master’s hand  
 Was busier with his task—to rid, to plant,  
 To rear for food, for shelter, and delight ; 195  
 A thriving covert ! And when wishes, formed  
 In youth, and sanctioned by the riper mind,  
 Restored me to my native valley, here  
 To end my days ; well pleased was I to see  
 The once-bare cottage, on the mountain-side, 200  
 Screen’d from assault of every bitter blast ;  
 While the dark shadows of the summer leaves  
 Danced in the breeze, chequering its mossy roof.  
 Time, which had thus afforded willing help  
 To beautify with nature’s fairest growths 205  
 This rustic tenement, had gently shed,  
 Upon its Master’s frame, a wintry grace ;  
 The comeliness of unenfeebled age.

“But how could I say, gently ? for he still  
 Retained a flashing eye, a burning palm, 210  
 A stirring foot, a head which beat at nights  
 Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes.  
 Few likings had he dropped, few pleasures lost ;  
 Generous and charitable, prompt to serve ;

186 fair] fresh MS. 188 festal 1827: festive MS., 1814–20  
 191 Of these old pastoral Homesteads, was inlaid. MS. 192 These  
 were the Mother’s and her daughters’ care MS. Those 1837: These  
 1814–32

196 . . . when humble wish

And hopes which with Heaven’s blessing have not failed MS.  
 203 chequering 1837: upon MS., 1814–32 205 growths 1837:  
 growth MS., 1814–32 211 a head 1827: and head 1814–20  
 212/13 Though like old Men, comparing present power  
 With past, he sometimes yielded to complaints, MS.  
 213/14 Of those that speed the day or cheer the mind ; MS.

And still his harsher passions kept their hold— 215  
 Anger and indignation. Still he loved  
 The sound of titled names, and talked in glee  
 Of long-past banquetings with high-born friends:  
 Then, from those lulling fits of vain delight  
 Uproused by recollected injury, railed 220  
 At their false ways disdainfully,—and oft  
 In bitterness, and with a threatening eye  
 Of fire, incensed beneath its hoary brow.  
 —Those transports, with staid looks of pure good-will,  
 And with soft smile, his consort would reprove. 225  
 She, far behind him in the race of years,  
 Yet keeping her first mildness, was advanced  
 Far nearer, in the habit of her soul,  
 To that still region whither all are bound.  
 Him might we liken to the setting sun 230  
 As seen not seldom on some gusty day,  
 Struggling and bold, and shining from the west  
 With an inconstant and unmellowed light;  
 She was a soft attendant cloud, that hung  
 As if with wish to veil the restless orb; 235  
 From which it did itself imbibe a ray  
 Of pleasing lustre.—But no more of this;  
 I better love to sprinkle on the sod  
 That now divides the pair, or rather say,  
 That still unites them, praises, like heaven's dew, 240  
 Without reserve descending upon both.

“Our very first in eminence of years  
 This old Man stood, the patriarch of the Vale!

216–23 . . . Still his tongue  
 Talked of those old exalted friends with glee,  
 And railed with pride at their deceitful ways,  
 And all too oft in words of bitter scorn  
 From which no time could shield them, nor the grave. MS., *corr.*

*to text, but genial for lulling*

224 Those 1837: These MS., 1814–32 231 *so* 1827: As I have  
 seen it *etc.* MS., 1814–20 233 inconstant] unquiet MS. 238  
 For I would rather MS. 239–40 That . . . That 1827: Which . . .  
 Which MS., 1814–20 241 *so* 1827: Without distinction falling  
 MS., 1814–20

241/2 —Yoke-fellows were they long and well approved  
 To endure and to perform.

With frugal pains,  
 Yet in a course of generous discipline,

And, to his unmolested mansion, death  
 Had never come, through space of forty years ; 245  
 Sparing both old and young in that abode.  
 Suddenly then they disappeared: not twice  
 Had summer scorched the fields; not twice had fallen,  
 On those high peaks, the first autumnal snow,  
 Before the greedy visiting was closed, 250  
 And the long-privileged house left empty—swept  
 As by a plague. Yet no rapacious plague  
 Had been among them; all was gentle death,  
 One after one, with intervals of peace.  
 A happy consummation! an accord 255  
 Sweet, perfect, to be wished for! save that here  
 Was something which to mortal sense might sound  
 Like harshness,—that the old grey-headed Sire,  
 The oldest, he was taken last, survived  
 When the meek Partner of his age, his Son, 260  
 His Daughter, and that late and high-prized gift,  
 His little smiling Grandchild, were no more.

“ ‘All gone, all vanished! he deprived and bare,  
 How will he face the remnant of his life ?

- Did this poor Churchman and his Consort rear  
 Their progeny.—Of three—sent forth to try  
 The paths of fortune in the open world,  
 One, not endowed with firmness to resist  
 The suit of pleasure, to his native Vale  
 Returned, and humbly tilled his Father's glebe.  
 —The youngest Daughter, too, in duty stayed  
 To lighten her declining Mother's care.  
 But, ere the bloom was passed away which health  
 Preserved to adorn a cheek no longer young,  
 Her heart, in course of nature, finding place  
 For new affections, to the holy state  
 Of wedlock they conducted her; but still  
 The Bride adhering to those filial cares  
 Dwelt with her Mate beneath her Father's roof. MS., 1814–20  
 244–6 Death to the happy house in which they dwelt  
 Had given a long reprieve of forty years *Tuft of Primroses (v. note)*  
 249 The first white snow upon Helvellyn's top *T. of P.* 255 A  
 consummation and a harmony *T. of P.* 255/6 Though framed of  
 sharp and melancholy notes MS. 257–8 . . . sounding to our mortal  
 sense Like discord *T. of P.*  
 260–2 When the dear Partner of his manhood's prime  
 His Son and Daughter, then a blooming wife,  
 And little etc. *T. of P.*

What will become of him ?' we said, and mused 265  
 In sad conjectures—'Shall we meet him now  
 Haunting with rod and line the craggy brooks ?  
 Or shall we overhear him, as we pass,  
 Striving to entertain the lonely hours  
 With music ?' (for he had not ceased to touch 270  
 The harp or viol which himself had framed,  
 For their sweet purposes, with perfect skill.)  
 'What titles will he keep ? will he remain  
 Musician, gardener, builder, mechanist,  
 A planter, and a rearer from the seed ? 275  
 A man of hope and forward-looking mind  
 Even to the last !'—Such was he, unsubdued.  
 But Heaven was gracious ; yet a little while,  
 And this Survivor, with his cheerful throng  
 Of open projects, and his inward hoard 280  
 Of unsunned griefs, too many and too keen,  
 Was overcome by unexpected sleep,  
 In one blest moment. Like a shadow thrown  
 Softly and lightly from a passing cloud,  
 Death fell upon him, while reclined he lay 285  
 For noontide solace on the summer grass,  
 The warm lap of his mother earth : and so,  
 Their lenient term of separation past,  
 That family (whose graves you there behold)

266 sad] vain *T. of P.* 267 craggy] rocky *T. of P.*

268-70 And mountain tarns, or shall we, as we pass,

Hear him alone, and solacing his ear

With music, for he in the fitful hours

Of his tranquillity had not ceased to touch *T. of P.*

272 And fitted to their tasks *etc. T. of P.*

278-80 'Twas but a little patience, and his term

Of solitude was spent—the aged One

Our very first in eminence of years (*v. ll.* 242-3)

The Patriarch of the vale ; a busy hand,

Nay more, a burning palm, a flashing eye

A restless foot, a head that beat at nights

Upon his pillow with a thousand schemes—

A Planter, and a Rearer from the Seed,

Builder had been but scanty means forbad—

A man of hope *etc. as l.* 276

Even to the last, he and his cheerful throng

Of open schemes and all his inward hoard *T. of P.*

280 so 1837: 1814-32 *as T. of P.* 286 noontide] ease and *T. of P.*

289 That family, the five whose graves you see *T. of P.*

By yet a higher privilege once more 290  
Were gathered to each other."

Calm of mind

And silence waited on these closing words;  
Until the Wanderer (whether moved by fear  
Lest in those passages of life were some  
That might have touched the sick heart of his Friend 295  
Too nearly, or intent to reinforce  
His own firm spirit in degree deprest  
By tender sorrow for our mortal state)  
Thus silence broke:—"Behold a thoughtless Man  
From vice and premature decay preserved 300  
By useful habits, to a fitter soil  
Transplanted ere too late.—The hermit, lodged  
Amid the untrodden desert, tells his beads,  
With each repeating its allotted prayer,  
And thus divides and thus relieves the time; 305  
Smooth task, with *his* compared, whose mind could string,  
Not scantily, bright minutes on the thread  
Of keen domestic anguish; and beguile  
A solitude, unchosen, unprofessed;  
Till gentlest death released him.

Far from us 310

Be the desire—too curiously to ask  
How much of this is but the blind result  
Of cordial spirits and vital temperament,  
And what to higher powers is justly due.  
But you, Sir, know that in a neighbouring vale 315  
A Priest abides before whose life such doubts  
Fall to the ground; whose gifts of nature lie  
Retired from notice, lost in attributes  
Of reason, honourably effaced by debts  
Which her poor treasure-house is content to owe, 320  
And conquests over her dominion gained,  
To which her frowardness must needs submit.  
In this one Man is shown a temperance—proof  
Against all trials; industry severe  
And constant as the motion of the day; 325  
Stern self-denial round him spread, with shade

294 those 1827: these 1814–20 303 Amid 1837: In MS., 1814–  
32 304 allotted] appointed C 310–11 Far . . . ask] Who shall  
say MS. 315 But in the compass of these pastoral Vales MS.

That might be deemed forbidding, did not there  
 All generous feelings flourish and rejoice ;  
 Forbearance, charity in deed and thought,  
 And resolution competent to take 330  
 Out of the bosom of simplicity  
 All that her holy customs recommend,  
 And the best ages of the world prescribe.  
 —Preaching, administering, in every work  
 Of his sublime vocation, in the walks 335  
 Of worldly intercourse between man and man,  
 And in his humble dwelling, he appears  
 A labourer, with moral virtue girt,  
 With spiritual graces, like a glory, crowned.”

“Doubt can be none,” the Pastor said, “for whom 340  
 This portraiture is sketched. The great, the good,  
 The well-beloved, the fortunate, the wise,—  
 These titles emperors and chiefs have held,  
 Honour assumed or given: and him, the WONDERFUL,  
 Our simple shepherds, speaking from the heart, 345  
 Deservedly have styled.—From his abode  
 In a dependent chapelry that lies  
 Behind yon hill, a poor and rugged wild,  
 Which in his soul he lovingly embraced,  
 And, having once espoused, would never quit ; 350  
 Into its graveyard will ere long be borne  
 That lowly, great, good Man. A simple stone  
 May cover him ; and by its help, perchance,  
 A century shall hear his name pronounced,  
 With images attendant on the sound ; 355  
 Then, shall the slowly-gathering twilight close  
 In utter night ; and of his course remain  
 No cognizable vestiges, no more  
 Than of this breath, which shapes itself in words  
 To speak of him, and instantly dissolves.” 360

336 between 1837: 'twixt MS., 1814-32      343 chiefs] Kings MS.  
 held C: borne 1814-50 v. note

351-2 so C and 1845: Hither, erelong, that lowly, great, good Man  
 Will be conveyed. An unelaborate Stone MS., 1814-43

357/8 Even in these peaceful mountain solitudes C del.

359 shapes 1827: frames MS., 1814-20

The Pastor pressed by thoughts which round his theme  
 Still linger'd, after a brief pause, resumed ;  
 "Noise is there not enough in doleful war,  
 But that the heaven-born poet must stand forth,  
 And lend the echoes of his sacred shell, 365  
 To multiply and aggravate the din ?  
 Pangs are there not enough in hopeless love—  
 And, in requited passion, all too much  
 Of turbulence, anxiety, and fear—  
 But that the minstrel of the rural shade 370  
 Must tune his pipe, insidiously to nurse  
 The perturbation in the suffering breast,  
 And propagate its kind, far as he may ?  
 —Ah who (and with such rapture as befits  
 The hallowed theme) will rise and celebrate 375  
 The good man's purposes and deeds ; retrace  
 His struggles, his discomfitures deplore,  
 His triumphs hail, and glorify his end ;  
 That virtue, like the fumes and vapoury clouds  
 Through fancy's heat redounding in the brain, 380  
 And like the soft infections of the heart,  
 By charm of measured words may spread o'er field,  
 Hamlet, and town ; and piety survive  
 Upon the lips of men in hall or bower ;  
 Not for reproof, but high and warm delight, 385  
 And grave encouragement, by song inspired ?  
 —Vain thought ! but wherefore murmur or repine ?  
 The memory of the just survives in heaven :  
 And, without sorrow, will the ground receive  
 That venerable clay. Meanwhile the best 390  
 Of what lies here confines us to degrees  
 In excellence less difficult to reach,  
 And milder worth : nor need we travel far  
 From those to whom our last regards were paid,

361-2 *added in 1845*                      373 *far as 1832: where'er MS., 1814-27*

374-9 *Ah, who would take upon him to rehearse*

*The good Man's praise in lyric strain or hymn*

*That virtue etc. MS.*

376 *purposes and deeds 1837: deeds and purposes 1814-32*

382-3 *so 1827: through fields And cottages; MS., 1814-20*                      389

*the ground 1845: this ground 1814-43*                      391 *so 1845: Of what it holds MS., 1814-43*

For such example.

Almost at the root 395

Of that tall pine, the shadow of whose bare  
 And slender stem, while here I sit at eve,  
 Oft stretches toward me, like a long straight path  
 Traced faintly in the greensward; there, beneath  
 A plain blue stone, a gentle Dalesman lies, 400  
 From whom, in early childhood, was withdrawn  
 The precious gift of hearing. He grew up  
 From year to year in loneliness of soul;  
 And this deep mountain-valley was to him  
 Soundless, with all its streams. The bird of dawn 405  
 Did never rouse this Cottager from sleep  
 With startling summons; not for his delight  
 The vernal cuckoo shouted; not for him  
 Murmured the labouring bee. When stormy winds  
 Were working the broad bosom of the lake 410  
 Into a thousand thousand sparkling waves,  
 Rocking the trees, or driving cloud on cloud  
 Along the sharp edge of yon lofty crags,  
 The agitated scene before his eye  
 Was silent as a picture: evermore 415  
 Were all things silent, wheresoe'er he moved.  
 Yet, by the solace of his own pure thoughts  
 Upheld, he duteously pursued the round  
 Of rural labours; the steep mountain-side  
 Ascended, with his staff and faithful dog; 420  
 The plough he guided, and the scythe he swayed;  
 And the ripe corn before his sickle fell  
 Among the jocund reapers. For himself,  
 All watchful and industrious as he was,  
 He wrought not: neither field nor flock he owned: 425  
 No wish for wealth had place within his mind;  
 Nor husband's love, nor father's hope or care.

"Though born a younger brother, need was none  
 That from the floor of his paternal home  
 He should depart, to plant himself anew. 430

395-400 Beneath that pine which rears its dusky head  
 Aloft, and covered by a plain blue stone

Briefly inscribed, a gentle Dalesman lies. *Essay on Epitaphs* III  
 398 toward 1837: tow'rds 1814-32 417 pure] calm MS.  
 427 No husband's MS.

And when, mature in manhood, he beheld  
 His parents laid in earth, no loss ensued  
 Of rights to him ; but he remained well pleased,  
 By the pure bond of independent love,  
 An inmate of a second family ; 435  
 The fellow-labourer and friend of him  
 To whom the small inheritance had fallen.  
 —Nor deem that his mild presence was a weight  
 That pressed upon his brother's house ; for books  
 Were ready comrades whom he could not tire ; 440  
 Of whose society the blameless Man  
 Was never satiate. Their familiar voice,  
 Even to old age, with unabated charm  
 Beguiled his leisure hours ; refreshed his thoughts ;  
 Beyond its natural elevation raised 445  
 His introverted spirit ; and bestowed  
 Upon his life an outward dignity  
 Which all acknowledged. The dark winter night,  
 The stormy day, each had its own resource ;  
 Song of the muses, sage historic tale, 450  
 Science severe, or word of holy Writ  
 Announcing immortality and joy  
 To the assembled spirits of just men  
 Made perfect, and from injury secure.  
 —Thus soothed at home, thus busy in the field, 455  
 To no perverse suspicion he gave way,  
 No languor, peevishness, nor vain complaint :  
 And they, who were about him, did not fail  
 In reverence, or in courtesy ; they prized  
 His gentle manners : and his peaceful smiles, 460  
 The gleams of his slow-varying countenance,  
 Were met with answering sympathy and love.

“At length, when sixty years and five were told,  
 A slow disease insensibly consumed  
 The powers of nature : and a few short steps 465  
 Of friends and kindred bore him from his home  
 (Yon cottage shaded by the woody crags)  
 To the profounder stillness of the grave.  
 —Nor was his funeral denied the grace

Of many tears, virtuous and thoughtful grief; 470  
 Heart-sorrow rendered sweet by gratitude.  
 And now that monumental stone preserves  
 His name, and unambitiously relates  
 How long, and by what kindly outward aids,  
 And in what pure contentedness of mind, 475  
 The sad privation was by him endured.  
 —And yon tall pine-tree, whose composing sound  
 Was wasted on the good Man's living ear,  
 Hath now its own peculiar sanctity;  
 And, at the touch of every wandering breeze, 480  
 Murmurs, not idly, o'er his peaceful grave.

“Soul-cheering Light, most bountiful of things!  
 Guide of our way, mysterious comforter!  
 Whose sacred influence, spread through earth and heaven,  
 We all too thanklessly participate, 485  
 Thy gifts were utterly withheld from him  
 Whose place of rest is near yon ivied porch.  
 Yet, of the wild brooks ask if he complained;  
 Ask of the channelled rivers if they held  
 A safer, easier, more determined, course. 490  
 What terror doth it strike into the mind  
 To think of one, blind and alone, advancing  
 Straight toward some precipice's airy brink!  
 But, timely warned, *He* would have stayed his steps,  
 Protected, say enlightened, by his ear; 495  
 And on the very edge of vacancy  
 Not more endangered than a man whose eye  
 Beholds the gulf beneath.—No floweret blooms  
 Throughout the lofty range of these rough hills,

490/1 Than that wherein he moved from morn to even MS.

491–500 To them his ways were known, with them he walked,  
 No other company required, the sport  
 Following in darkness which their streams supplied.  
 On mountain height, in wood or shady dell,  
 Flowers have we none that could from him conceal *corr. to*  
 With them he oftentimes walked from morn to even  
 Nor other *etc. to* supplied *as above*.  
 Or floweret bloom throughout the lofty range  
 Of these rough hills, in open field or wood  
 There could be none that could from him conceal MS.

492 *so* 1845: who cannot see, advancing 1814–43

493 Straight

toward 1837: Towards 1814–27: Toward 1832

496 edge 1827: brink 1814–20

Nor in the woods, that could from him conceal 500  
 Its birthplace ; none whose figure did not live  
 Upon his touch. The bowels of the earth  
 Enriched with knowledge his industrious mind ;  
 The ocean paid him tribute from the stores  
 Lodged in her bosom ; and, by science led, 505  
 His genius mounted to the plains of heaven.  
 —Methinks I see him—how his eye-balls rolled,  
 Beneath his ample brow, in darkness paired,—  
 But each instinct with spirit ; and the frame  
 Of the whole countenance alive with thought, 510  
 Fancy, and understanding ; while the voice  
 Discoursed of natural or moral truth  
 With eloquence, and such authentic power,  
 That, in his presence, humbler knowledge stood  
 Abashed, and tender pity overawed.” 515

“A noble—and, to unreflecting minds,  
 A marvellous spectacle,” the Wanderer said,  
 “Beings like these present ! But proof abounds  
 Upon the earth that faculties, which seem  
 Extinguished, do not, *therefore*, cease to be. 520  
 And to the mind among her powers of sense  
 This transfer is permitted,—not alone  
 That the bereft their recompense may win ;  
 But for remoter purposes of love

500 Nor 1837: Or 1814–32

502–22

Nay, further (to such height

The grateful wonder mounts) he could peruse  
 The dappled skin of each familiar beast  
 That serves in House or field, and every spot  
 Could tell, by nature painted on the coat  
 Of all the little creatures slim and sleek  
 Who hide in clefts or burrow in the ground (*corr. to under earth*)  
 Shy as the guilty ; and the feathered Bird,  
 Admired for sight with variegated hues,  
 Brought to his tutored hand appeared to yield  
 Those subtle colours to some inward sense.  
 Such conquest heaven permits ; and not alone MS.

512 or 1827: and 1814–20

521 From such example Reason may be taught

Her pride to check, her foolishness to warn,

Affections prone to grovel and descend

May be upraised. Among the powers of sense MS.

523 so 1827: . . . may win their recompense 1814–20

And charity ; nor last nor least for this, 525  
 That to the imagination may be given  
 A type and shadow of an awful truth ;  
 How, likewise, under sufferance divine,  
 Darkness is banished from the realms of death,  
 By man's imperishable spirit, quelled. 530  
 Unto the men who see not as we see  
 Futurity was thought, in ancient times,  
 To be laid open, and they prophesied.  
 And know we not that from the blind have flowed  
 The highest, holiest, raptures of the lyre ; 535  
 And wisdom married to immortal verse ?"

Among the humbler Worthies, at our feet  
 Lying insensible to human praise,  
 Love, or regret,—*whose* lineaments would next  
 Have been portrayed, I guess not ; but it chanced 540  
 That, near the quiet churchyard where we sate,  
 A team of horses, with a ponderous freight  
 Pressing behind, adown a rugged slope,  
 Whose sharp descent confounded their array,  
 Came at that moment, ringing noisily. 545

"Here," said the Pastor, "do we muse, and mourn  
 The waste of death ; and lo ! the giant oak  
 Stretched on his bier—that massy timber wain ;  
 Nor fail to note the Man who guides the team."

He was a peasant of the lowest class : 550  
 Grey locks profusely round his temples hung  
 In clustering curls, like ivy, which the bite  
 Of winter cannot thin ; the fresh air lodged  
 Within his cheek, as light within a cloud ;  
 And he returned our greeting with a smile. 555  
 When he had passed, the Solitary spake ;  
 "A Man he seems of cheerful yesterdays  
 And confident to-morrows ; with a face

530 spirit] Being MS.

541 That, near] That our attention now

was drawn aside, For, near MS.

542-5 A team of horses slackened and confused

By the rough slope down which their ponderous freight

Was following them, came ringing noisily MS.

549 But mark the Man who guides the jolly team MS.

550 lowest]

humblest MS.

Not worldly-minded, for it bears too much  
 Of Nature's impress,—gaiety and health, 560  
 Freedom and hope; but keen, withal, and shrewd.  
 His gestures note,—and hark! his tones of voice  
 Are all vivacious as his mien and looks."

The Pastor answered, "You have read him well.  
 Year after year is added to his store 565  
 With *silent* increase: summers, winters—past,  
 Past or to come; yea, boldly might I say,  
 Ten summers and ten winters of a space  
 That lies beyond life's ordinary bounds,  
 Upon his sprightly vigour cannot fix 570  
 The obligation of an anxious mind,  
 A pride in having, or a fear to lose;  
 Possessed like outskirts of some large domain,  
 By any one more thought of than by him  
 Who holds the land in fee, its careless lord! 575  
 Yet is the creature rational, endowed  
 With foresight; hears, too, every sabbath day,  
 The Christian promise with attentive ear;  
 Nor will, I trust, the Majesty of Heaven  
 Reject the incense offered up by him, 580  
 Though of the kind which beasts and birds present  
 In grove or pasture; cheerfulness of soul,  
 From trepidation and repining free.  
 How many scrupulous worshippers fall down  
 Upon their knees, and daily homage pay 585  
 Less worthy, less religious even, than his!

"This qualified respect, the old Man's due,  
 Is paid without reluctance; but in truth,"  
 (Said the good Vicar with a fond half-smile)

576-81

. . . a Man

Endowed with sacred reason, and he hears  
 The Christian promises on sabbath days  
 Nor disbelieves the tidings which he hears.  
 Meanwhile the incense *etc.*  
 Is of the kind *etc.* MS.

579-81 *so* 1827: 1814-20 *as* MS. *supra*

579-83 The incense which he offers up to him  
 Is of the kind that Bird and beast present  
 To the great father, cheerfulness of soul  
 In which repining finds no place MS. *fragment*

"I feel at times a motion of despite 590  
 Towards one, whose bold contrivances and skill,  
 As you have seen, bear such conspicuous part  
 In works of havoc; taking from these vales,  
 One after one, their proudest ornaments.  
 Full oft his doings leave me to deplore 595  
 Tall ash-tree, sown by winds, by vapours nursed,  
 In the dry crannies of the pendent rocks;  
 Light birch, aloft upon the horizon's edge,  
 A veil of glory for the ascending moon;  
 And oak whose roots by noontide dew were damped, 600  
 And on whose forehead inaccessible  
 The raven lodged in safety.—Many a ship  
 Launched into Morecamb-bay, to *him* hath owed  
 Her strong knee-timbers, and the mast that bears  
 The loftiest of her pendants; He, from park 605  
 Or forest, fetched the enormous axle-tree  
 That whirls (how slow itself!) ten thousand spindles:  
 And the vast engine labouring in the mine,

591 Towards] Tow'rds MS.      594 And the steep crags, their proudest ornaments MS.

595–623 Wherever tree might grow of name or note

He bought, he chaffered, and with words of skill  
 Suited to various tempers and estates  
 Plied the reluctant Owner till he gained  
 Full oft his purpose. The tall household fir  
 A not unfrequent ornament and guard  
 Of our old Homesteads, providently placed  
 To break the onset of the fierce north winds,  
 The honied sycamore in whose cool shade  
 Year after year the bleating flock are shorn,  
 The elm round which the lasses dance in May  
 And the Lord's Oak, not one would he have spared  
 For dignity for old acquaintance sake,  
 For antient custom or distinguished name.  
 Him, as I said, the season's difference  
 Distress'd not, and the noisy world's report  
 Of tumults, wars, and victories and defeats MS. (*draft i*)

598/9 A texture thin of leaves and twigs that make MS.: Transparent texture, framing in the East 1814–20      599/600 In the pure confines of the cerulean sky MS.      603 ... Morecamb-bay, from him receives MS.: hath owed to him 1814–20

605–7 *so* 1827:      ... Help he gives

To lordly mansion rising far or near;  
 The enormous wheel that turns ten thousand spindles MS.,  
 1814–20

Content with meaner prowess, must have lacked  
 The trunk and body of its marvellous strength, 610  
 If his undaunted enterprise had failed  
 Among the mountain coves.

Yon household fir,

A guardian planted to fence off the blast,  
 But towering high the roof above, as if  
 Its humble destination were forgot— 615  
 That sycamore, which annually holds  
 Within its shade, as in a stately tent  
 On all sides open to the fanning breeze,  
 A grave assemblage, seated while they shear  
 The fleece-encumbered flock—the JOYFUL ELM, 620  
 Around whose trunk the maidens dance in May—  
 And the LORD'S OAK—would plead their several rights  
 In vain, if he were master of their fate;  
 His sentence to the axe would doom them all.  
 But, green in age and lusty as he is, 625  
 And promising to keep his hold on earth  
 Less, as might seem, in rivalry with men  
 Than with the forest's more enduring growth,  
 His own appointed hour will come at last;  
 And, like the haughty Spoilers of the world, 630  
 This keen Destroyer, in his turn, must fall.

“Now from the living pass we once again:  
 From Age,” the Priest continued, “turn your thoughts;  
 From Age, that often unlamented drops,  
 And mark that daisied hillock, three spans long! 635  
 —Seven lusty Sons sate daily round the board

610 its 1827: their MS., 1814-20

612-23 And his keen search among the coves and woods  
 In forest, heath, or chase. The fir that fends  
 His neighbour's Cottage from the cutting blast  
 Would fall if he were master of its doom.  
 The Elm *etc. as draft i to name* MS.

612 coves. Yon 1827: coves, or keen research

In forest, park, or chase. Yon 1814-20

621 maidens 1827: lasses 1814-20

623/4 Not one would have his pitiful regard

For prized accomodation, pleasant use,

For dignity for . . . name (*as MS. 595-623 supra*) 1814-20

625-31 *v. note, p. 466, infra* 626 *so* 1827 to stand a hundred years

MS.: . . . from year to year 1814-20 629-31 His fatal hour will come,  
 and he must fall MS. 633-4 *not in* MS. 635 Turn to *etc.* MS.

Of Gold-rill side ; and, when the hope had ceased  
 Of other progeny, a Daughter then  
 Was given, the crowning bounty of the whole ;  
 And so acknowledged with a tremulous joy 640  
 Felt to the centre of that heavenly calm  
 With which by nature every mother's soul  
 Is stricken in the moment when her throes  
 Are ended, and her ears have heard the cry  
 Which tells her that a living child is born ; 645  
 And she lies conscious, in a blissful rest,  
 That the dread storm is weathered by them both.

“The Father—him at this unlooked-for gift  
 A bolder transport seizes. From the side  
 Of his bright hearth, and from his open door, 650  
 Day after day the gladness is diffused  
 To all that come, almost to all that pass ;  
 Invited, summoned, to partake the cheer  
 Spread on the never-empty board, and drink  
 Health and good wishes to his new-born girl, 655  
 From cups replenished by his joyous hand.  
 —Those seven fair brothers variously were moved  
 Each by the thoughts best suited to his years :  
 But most of all and with most thankful mind  
 The hoary grandsire felt himself enriched ; 660  
 A happiness that ebb'd not, but remained  
 To fill the total measure of his soul !  
 —From the low tenement, his own abode,  
 Whither, as to a little private cell,  
 He had withdrawn from bustle, care, and noise, 665  
 To spend the sabbath of old age in peace,  
 Once every day he duteously repaired  
 To rock the cradle of the slumbering babe :  
 For in that female infant's name he heard  
 The silent name of his departed wife ; 670  
 Heart-stirring music ! hourly heard that name ;

639 crowning bounty 1827: crown and glory MS., 1814-20

640-1 so 1827: Welcomed with joy, whose penetrating power  
 Was not unfelt amid MS., 1814-20

650/1 And from the laurel-shaded seat thereby 1814-20

653-5 Invited to partake the festal cheer

And drink good wishes to his new-born girl MS.

657 seven] six MS.

Full blest he was, 'Another Margaret Green,'  
Oft did he say, 'was come to Gold-rill side.'

"Oh! pang unthought of, as the precious boon  
Itself had been unlooked-for; oh! dire stroke 675  
Of desolating anguish for them all!

—Just as the Child could totter on the floor,  
And, by some friendly finger's help upstayed  
Range round the garden walk, while she perchance 680  
Was catching at some novelty of spring,

Ground-flower, or glossy insect from its cell  
Drawn by the sunshine—at that hopeful season  
The winds of March, smiting insidiously,  
Raised in the tender passage of the throat 685

Viewless obstruction; whence, all unforewarned,  
The household lost their pride and soul's delight.

—But time hath power to soften all regrets,  
And prayer and thought can bring to worst distress  
Due resignation. Therefore, though some tears  
Fail not to spring from either Parent's eye 690

Oft as they hear of sorrow like their own,  
Yet this departed Little-one, too long  
The innocent troubler of their quiet, sleeps  
In what may now be called a peaceful bed.

"On a bright day—so calm and bright, it seemed 695  
To us, with our sad spirits, heavenly-fair—

These mountains echoed to an unknown sound;  
A volley, thrice repeated o'er the Corse

Let down into the hollow of that grave,  
Whose shelving sides are red with naked mould. 700  
Ye rains of April, duly wet this earth!

679–83 *so* 1827:

Range round the garden walk, whose low ground (winter MS.)-flowers  
Were peeping forth, shy messengers of spring,—

Even at that hopeful time,—the winds of March,

One sunny day, smiting insidiously MS., 1814–20

686 pride MS., 1814–20: hope 1827

687 *so* 1827: —But Providence, that gives and takes away

By his own law is merciful and just;

Time wants not *etc.* MS., 1814–20

694 bed 1827: grave MS., 1814–20

695–7 *so* 1827: On a bright day, the brightest of the year,  
These mountains echoed with *etc.* 1814–20

Spare, burning sun of midsummer, these sods,  
 That they may knit together, and therewith  
 Our thoughts unite in kindred quietness!  
 Nor so the Valley shall forget her loss. 705  
 Dear Youth, by young and old alike beloved,  
 To me as precious as my own!—Green herbs  
 May creep (I wish that they would softly creep)  
 Over thy last abode, and we may pass  
 Reminded less imperiously of thee;— 710  
 The ridge itself may sink into the breast  
 Of earth, the great abyss, and be no more;  
 Yet shall not thy remembrance leave our hearts,  
 Thy image disappear!

The Mountain-ash

No eye can overlook, when 'mid a grove 715  
 Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head  
 Decked with autumnal berries, that outshine  
 Spring's richest blossoms; and ye may have marked,  
 By a brook-side or solitary tarn,  
 How she her station doth adorn: the pool 720  
 Glows at her feet, and all the gloomy rocks  
 Are brightened round her. In his native vale  
 Such and so glorious did this Youth appear;  
 A sight that kindled pleasure in all hearts  
 By his ingenuous beauty, by the gleam 725  
 Of his fair eyes, by his capacious brow,  
 By all the graces with which nature's hand  
 Had lavishly arrayed him. As old bards  
 Tell in their idle songs of wandering gods,  
 Pan or Apollo, veiled in human form: 730  
 Yet, like the sweet-breathed violet of the shade,  
 Discovered in their own despite to sense  
 Of mortals (if such fables without blame  
 May find chance-mention on this sacred ground)  
 So, through a simple rustic garb's disguise, 735  
 And through the impediment of rural cares,  
 In him revealed a scholar's genius shone;  
 And so, not wholly hidden from men's sight,

715-16 so 1827: not in 1814-20

718 so 1827: Spring's richest blossoms, yields a splendid show,  
 Amid the leafy woods; and ye have seen 1814-20

728 lavishly 1827: bounteously 1814-20

In him the spirit of a hero walked  
 Our unpretending valley.—How the quoit 740  
 Whizzed from the Stripling's arm! If touched by him,  
 The inglorious football mounted to the pitch  
 Of the lark's flight,—or shaped a rainbow curve,  
 Aloft, in prospect of the shouting field!  
 The indefatigable fox had learned 745  
 To dread his perseverance in the chase.  
 With admiration would he lift his eyes  
 To the wide-ruling eagle, and his hand  
 Was loth to assault the majesty he loved:  
 Else had the strongest fastnesses proved weak 750  
 To guard the royal brood. The sailing glead,  
 The wheeling swallow, and the darting snipe,  
 The sportive sea-gull dancing with the waves,  
 And cautious water-fowl, from distant climes,  
 Fixed at their seat, the centre of the Mere, 755  
 Were subject to young Oswald's steady aim,  
 And lived by his forbearance.

From the coast  
 Of France a boastful Tyrant hurled his threats;  
 Our Country marked the preparation vast  
 Of hostile forces; and she called—with voice 760  
 That filled her plains, that reached her utmost shores,  
 And in remotest vales was heard—to arms!  
 —Then, for the first time, here you might have seen  
 The shepherd's grey to martial scarlet changed,  
 That flashed uncouthly through the woods and fields. 765  
 Ten hardy Striplings, all in bright attire,  
 And graced with shining weapons, weekly marched,  
 From this lone valley, to a central spot  
 Where, in assemblage with the flower and choice  
 Of the surrounding district, they might learn 770

745-6 The fox, in mazy wiles however versed  
 Or confident in strength for onward flight  
 Over hill, vale, and stream was taught to dread  
 His voice, and indefatigable feet  
 Still foremost, longest in the obstinate chase, C

747 would he 1827: he could 1814-20 756 aim, 1837: aim.  
 1814-32 757-8 so 1837: From Gallia's coast a Tyrant's threats were  
 hurled 1814-20: . . . a Tyrant hurled his threats 1827-32 759 pre-  
 paration 1827: preparations 1814-20 761 so 1832: plains and  
 1814-27

The rudiments of war ; ten—hardy, strong,  
 And valiant ; but young Oswald, like a chief  
 And yet a modest comrade, led them forth  
 From their shy solitude, to face the world,  
 With a gay confidence and seemly pride ; 775  
 Measuring the soil beneath their happy feet  
 Like Youths released from labour, and yet bound  
 To most laborious service, though to them  
 A festival of unencumbered ease ;  
 The inner spirit keeping holiday, 780  
 Like vernal ground to sabbath sunshine left.

“Oft have I marked him, at some leisure hour,  
 Stretched on the grass, or seated in the shade,  
 Among his fellows, while an ample map  
 Before their eyes lay carefully outspread, 785  
 From which the gallant teacher would discourse,  
 Now pointing this way, and now that.—‘Here flows,’  
 Thus would he say, ‘the Rhine, that famous stream !  
 Eastward, the Danube toward this inland sea,  
 A mightier river, winds from realm to realm ; 790  
 And, like a serpent, shows his glittering back  
 Bespotted—with innumerable isles :  
 Here reigns the Russian, there the Turk ; observe  
 His capital city !’ Thence, along a tract  
 Of livelier interest to his hopes and fears, 795  
 His finger moved, distinguishing the spots  
 Where wide-spread conflict then most fiercely raged ;  
 Nor left unstigmatized those fatal fields  
 On which the sons of mighty Germany  
 Were taught a base submission.—‘Here behold 800  
 A nobler race, the Switzers, and their land,

782–801

. . . seated on the wall

Of that rude bridge with map in hand and so  
 Discoursing with his Fellows. There the Rhine,  
 Here flows the Danube ; then, along the tract  
 His fingers moved, where at that moment war  
 Was raging, and the last fields had been fought,  
 To Austerlitz he pointed, and to the plain  
 Of Jena, upon which—O shame O pride  
 For where no Country is, there man is not—  
 A battle lost an Empire. Here behold  
 Southward the Switzers land, a nobler race MS.

789 toward 1837: tow'rds 1814–20: tow'rd 1827–32

Vales deeper far than these of ours, huge woods,  
 And mountains white with everlasting snow!’  
 —And, surely, he, that spake with kindling brow,  
 Was a true patriot, hopeful as the best 805  
 Of that young peasantry, who, in our days,  
 Have fought and perished for Helvetia’s rights—  
 Ah, not in vain!—or those who, in old time,  
 For work of happier issue, to the side  
 Of Tell came trooping from a thousand huts, 810  
 When he had risen alone! No braver Youth  
 Descended from Judean heights, to march  
 With righteous Joshua; nor appeared in arms  
 When grove was felled, and altar was cast down,  
 And Gideon blew the trumpet, soul-inflamed, 815  
 And strong in hatred of idolatry.”

The Pastor, even as if by these last words  
 Raised from his seat within the chosen shade,  
 Moved towards the grave;—instinctively his steps  
 We followed; and my voice with joy exclaimed: 820  
 “Power to the Oppressors of the world is given,  
 A might of which they dream not. Oh! the curse,  
 To be the awakener of divinest thoughts,  
 Father and founder of exalted deeds;  
 And, to whole nations bound in servile straits, 825  
 The liberal donor of capacities

804-5 And surely he that spake, and he whose brow  
 Had crimsoned like a rock on [ ] side  
 When from the west the sun through stormy clouds  
 Hath smitten it with gleams sudden and deep—  
 He was a patriot *etc.* MS.

807 Have perished for Helvetia’s antient rights *corr. to* Perished by thou-  
 sands for *etc. as text* MS. 811/12 None more inclined to good and  
 glorious acts MS. 812 Judean 1827: Judea’s 1814-20 813  
 nor 1837: or MS., 1814-32

817-20 *so* 1837: This spoken, from his seat the Pastor rose,  
 And moved towards the grave;—instinctively  
 His steps we followed; and my voice exclaimed, 1814-32

822 might] Power MS.

823-4 Forth sallying in a blind distemper’d rage,  
 To be in good men’s hearts a scorn that shakes,  
 That nourishes and strengthens while it shakes,  
 A spark that gives existence to a flame  
 Which else had never kindled, I might say  
 To be the father of divinest thoughts MS.

More than heroic! this to be, nor yet  
 Have sense of one connatural wish, nor yet  
 Deserve the least return of human thanks;  
 Winning no recompense but deadly hate 830  
 With pity mixed, astonishment with scorn!"

When this involuntary strain had ceased,  
 The Pastor said: "So Providence is served;  
 The forkèd weapon of the skies can send  
 Illumination into deep, dark holds, 835  
 Which the mild sunbeam hath not power to pierce.  
 Ye Thrones that have defied remorse, and cast  
 Pity away, soon shall ye quake with *fear*!  
 For, not unconscious of the mighty debt  
 Which to outrageous wrong the sufferer owes, 840  
 Europe, through all her habitable bounds,  
 Is thirsting for *their* overthrow, who yet  
 Survive, as pagan temples stood of yore,  
 By horror of their impious rites, preserved;  
 Are still permitted to extend their pride 845  
 Like cedars on the top of Lebanon  
 Darkening the sun.

But less impatient thoughts,  
 And love 'all hoping and expecting all,'  
 This hallowed grave demands, where rests in peace  
 A humble champion of the better cause; 850  
 A Peasant-youth, so call him, for he asked  
 No higher name; in whom our country showed,  
 As in a favourite son, most beautiful.  
 In spite of vice, and misery, and disease,  
 Spread with the spreading of her wealthy arts, 855  
 England, the ancient and the free, appeared  
 In him to stand before my swimming eyes,  
 Unconquerably virtuous and secure.  
 —No more of this, lest I offend his dust:  
 Short was his life, and a brief tale remains. 860

832 this . . . strain 1837: these . . . words 1814-32 837-8 so

1837: Why do ye quake, intimidated Thrones? 1814-32 841 bounds

1837: Seats 1814-32

842-5 so 1837: . . . who still

Exist, as Pagan Temples stood of old,  
 By very horror of their impious rites  
 Preserved; are suffered to *etc.* 1814-32

"One day—a summer's day of annual pomp  
 And solemn chase—from morn to sultry noon  
 His steps had followed, fleetest of the fleet,  
 The red-deer driven along its native heights  
 With cry of hound and horn; and, from that toil 865  
 Returned with sinews weakened and relaxed,  
 This generous Youth, too negligent of self,  
 Plunged—'mid a gay and busy throng convened  
 To wash the fleeces of his Father's flock—  
 Into the chilling flood. Convulsions dire 870  
 Seized him, that self-same night; and through the space  
 Of twelve ensuing days his frame was wrenched,  
 Till nature rested from her work in death.  
 To him, thus snatched away, his comrades paid  
 A soldier's honours. At his funeral hour 875  
 Bright was the sun, the sky a cloudless blue—  
 A golden lustre slept upon the hills;  
 And if by chance a stranger, wandering there,  
 From some commanding eminence had looked  
 Down on this spot, well pleased would he have seen 880  
 A glittering spectacle; but every face  
 Was pallid: seldom hath that eye been moist  
 With tears, that wept not then; nor were the few,  
 Who from their dwellings came not forth to join  
 In this sad service, less disturbed than we. 885  
 They started at the tributary peal  
 Of instantaneous thunder, which announced,  
 Through the still air, the closing of the Grave;  
 And distant mountains echoed with a sound  
 Of lamentation, never heard before!" 890

The Pastor ceased.—My venerable Friend  
 Victoriously upraised his clear bright eye;  
 And, when that eulogy was ended, stood  
 Enrapt, as if his inward sense perceived

861 so 1845: One summer's day, a day of annual pomp 1814-43

868-70 so 1827: (A natural failing which maturer years  
 Would have subdued) took fearlessly—and kept—  
 His wonted station in the chilling flood,  
 Among a busy company convened

To wash his Father's flock. Convulsions dire 1814-20

894-5 Listening as if another voice yet spake  
 The confirmation, or in still response

The prolongation of some still response, 895  
 Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide land,  
 The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,  
 Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,  
 Its rights and virtues—by that Deity  
 Descending, and supporting his pure heart 900  
 With patriotic confidence and joy.  
 And, at the last of those memorial words,  
 The pining Solitary turned aside ;  
 Whether through manly instinct to conceal  
 Tender emotions spreading from the heart 905  
 To his worn cheek ; or with uneasy shame  
 For those cold humours of habitual spleen  
 That, fondly seeking in dispraise of man  
 Solace and self-excuse, had sometimes urged  
 To self-abuse a not ineloquent tongue. 910  
 —Right toward the sacred Edifice his steps  
 Had been directed ; and we saw him now  
 Intent upon a monumental stone,  
 Whose uncouth form was grafted on the wall,  
 Or rather seemed to have grown into the side 915  
 Of the rude pile ; as oft times trunks of trees,  
 Where nature works in wild and craggy spots,  
 Are seen incorporate with the living rock—  
 To endure for aye. The Vicar, taking note  
 Of his employment, with a courteous smile 920  
 Exclaimed—

“The sagest Antiquarian’s eye  
 That task would foil ;” then, letting fall his voice  
 While he advanced, thus spake : “Tradition tells  
 That, in Eliza’s golden days, a Knight  
 Came on a war-horse sumptuously attired, 925  
 And fixed his home in this sequestered vale.  
 ’Tis left untold if here he first drew breath,  
 Or as a stranger reached this deep recess,  
 Unknowing and unknown. A pleasing thought

Such as the echoes utter’d, render’d back

That funeral tribute from their quiet cells MS.

905–6 Nature’s involuntary workings felt On *etc.* MS. 911 toward  
 1827: tow’rds 1814–20 914 form] frame MS. 915 into] out  
 of MS. 919 taking note] with a smile MS. 920 *not in* MS.  
 922–3 *so* 1827: And, with these added words He thitherward [towards the  
 spot MS.] advanced) MS., 1814–20

I sometimes entertain, that haply bound 930  
 To Scotland's court in service of his Queen,  
 Or sent on mission to some northern Chief  
 Of England's realm, this vale he might have seen  
 With transient observation; and thence caught  
 An image fair, which, brightening in his soul 935  
 When joy of war and pride of chivalry  
 Languished beneath accumulated years,  
 Had power to draw him from the world, resolved  
 To make that paradise his chosen home  
 To which his peaceful fancy oft had turned. 940

"Vague thoughts are these; but, if belief may rest  
 Upon unwritten story fondly traced  
 From sire to son, in this obscure retreat  
 The Knight arrived, with spear and shield, and borne  
 Upon a Charger gorgeously bedecked 945  
 With brodered housings. And the lofty Steed—  
 His sole companion, and his faithful friend,  
 Whom he, in gratitude, let loose to range  
 In fertile pastures—was beheld with eyes  
 Of admiration and delightful awe, 950  
 By those untravelled Dalesmen. With less pride,  
 Yet free from touch of envious discontent,  
 They saw a mansion at his bidding rise,  
 Like a bright star, amid the lowly band  
 Of their rude homesteads. Here the Warrior dwelt; 955  
 And, in that mansion, children of his own,  
 Or kindred, gathered round him. As a tree  
 That falls and disappears, the house is gone;  
 And, through improvidence or want of love  
 For ancient worth and honourable things, 960  
 The spear and shield are vanished, which the Knight

933-4 . . . he might have passed this way

And from this Valley caught with transient glance MS.

936-7 so 1827: When years admonished him of failing strength

And he no more rejoiced in war's delights, MS., 1814-20

938 from the world] to this Vale MS.

943 retreat] recess MS.

944-6 so 1845: . . . with pomp of spear and shield,

And borne upon a Charger covered o'er

With gilded housings. MS., 1814-43

955 homesteads] dwellings MS.

Hung in his rustic hall. One ivied arch  
 Myself have seen, a gateway, last remains  
 Of that foundation in domestic care  
 Raised by his hands. And now no trace is left 965  
 Of the mild-hearted Champion, save this stone,  
 Faithless memorial! and his family name  
 Borne by yon clustering cottages, that sprang  
 From out the ruins of his stately lodge:  
 These, and the name and title at full length,— 970  
 Sir Alfred Erthing, with appropriate words  
 Accompanied, still extant, in a wreath  
 Or posy, girding round the several fronts  
 Of three clear-sounding and harmonious bells,  
 That in the steeple hang, his pious gift.” 975

“So fails, so languishes, grows dim, and dies,”  
 The grey-haired Wanderer pensively exclaimed,  
 “All that this world is proud of. From their spheres  
 The stars of human glory are cast down;  
 Perish the roses and the flowers of kings, 980  
 Princes, and emperors, and the crowns and palms  
 Of all the mighty, withered and consumed!  
 Nor is power given to lowliest innocence  
 Long to protect her own. The man himself  
 Departs; and soon is spent the line of those 985  
 Who, in the bodily image, in the mind,  
 In heart or soul, in station or pursuit,  
 Did most resemble him. Degrees and ranks,  
 Fraternities and orders—heaping high  
 New wealth upon the burthen of the old, 990  
 And placing trust in privilege confirmed  
 And re-confirmed—are scoffed at with a smile  
 Of greedy foretaste, from the secret stand

969 lodge] House MS.  
 decayed MS.

972 in] like MS.

982 blasted or

989–99 Classes and orders, all are swept away,  
 Their virtues, service, happiness and state,  
 Their monuments and their memory. *etc.* MS. *draft* i

990–9 Wealth heap'd on wealth and privilege confirm'd  
 And re-confirmed are shattered and dispersed  
 As with a breath and Ruin overwhelms.  
 And finally green grass [sweet ?] Nature's robe  
 Humanity's appointed shroud enwraps  
 Their monuments *etc.* MS. *draft* ii

Of Desolation, aimed : to slow decline  
 These yield, and these to sudden overthrow : 995  
 Their virtue, service, happiness, and state  
 Expire ; and nature's pleasant robe of green,  
 Humanity's appointed shroud, enwraps  
 Their monuments and their memory. The vast Frame  
 Of social nature changes evermore 1000  
 Her organs and her members, with decay  
 Restless, and restless generation, powers  
 And functions dying and produced at need,—  
 And by this law the mighty whole subsists :  
 With an ascent and progress in the main ; 1005  
 Yet, oh ! how disproportioned to the hopes  
 And expectations of self-flattering minds !

“The courteous Knight, whose bones are here interred,  
 Lived in an age conspicuous as our own  
 For strife and ferment in the minds of men ; 1010  
 Whence alteration in the forms of things,  
 Various and vast. A memorable age !  
 Which did to him assign a pensive lot—  
 To linger 'mid the last of those bright clouds  
 That, on the steady breeze of honour, sailed 1015  
 In long procession calm and beautiful.  
 He who had seen his own bright order fade,  
 And its devotion gradually decline,  
 (While war, relinquishing the lance and shield,  
 Her temper changed, and bowed to other laws) 1020  
 Had also witnessed, in his morn of life,  
 That violent commotion, which o'erthrew,  
 In town and city and sequestered glen,  
 Altar, and cross, and church of solemn roof,  
 And old religious house—pile after pile ; 1025  
 And shook their tenants out into the fields,  
 Like wild beasts without home ! Their hour was come ;  
 But why no softening thought of gratitude,  
 No just remembrance, scruple, or wise doubt ?  
 Benevolence is mild ; nor borrows help, 1030

1007 minds] hearts MS.

1009–14 Lived at a time when 'twas his pensive lot

To linger *etc.* MS.

1019 While war, compelled to assume a different shape MS. 1021

life] youth MS. 1026 their 1837: the MS., 1814–32

Save at worst need, from bold impetuous force,  
 Fitliest allied to anger and revenge.  
 But Human-kind rejoices in the might  
 Of mutability; and airy hopes,  
 Dancing around her, hinder and disturb 1035  
 Those meditations of the soul that feed  
 The retrospective virtues. Festive songs  
 Break from the maddened nations at the sight  
 Of sudden overthrow; and cold neglect  
 Is the sure consequence of slow decay. 1040

“Even,” said the Wanderer, “as that courteous Knight,  
 Bound by his vow to labour for redress  
 Of all who suffer wrong, and to enact  
 By sword and lance the law of gentleness,  
 (If I may venture of myself to speak, 1045  
 Trusting that not incongruously I blend  
 Low things with lofty) I too shall be doomed  
 To outlive the kindly use and fair esteem  
 Of the poor calling which my youth embraced  
 With no unworthy prospect. But enough; 1050  
 —Thoughts crowd upon me—and ’twere seemlier now  
 To stop, and yield our gracious Teacher thanks  
 For the pathetic records which his voice  
 Hath here delivered; words of heartfelt truth,  
 Tending to patience when affliction strikes; 1055  
 To hope and love; to confident repose  
 In God; and reverence for the dust of Man.”

1035 Prevent, around her dancing giddily, MS.

1042-4 Who, unattended, came to wear out here

The last and better portion of life's day

As in a Convent's hallowed privacy MS.

1049-50 Of my own humble calling. But enough MS. 1052-3

... to our gracious Teacher yield Thanks for the moving lessons which MS.

## BOOK EIGHTH THE PARSONAGE

### ARGUMENT

Pastor's apology and<sup>1</sup> apprehensions that he might have detained his Auditors too long, with the Pastor's<sup>2</sup> invitation to his house.—Solitary disinclined to comply—rallies the Wanderer—and playfully<sup>3</sup> draws a comparison between his itinerant profession and that of the Knight-errant—which leads to Wanderer's giving an account of changes in the Country from the manufacturing spirit.—Favourable effects.—The other side of the picture, and chiefly as it has affected the humbler classes.—Wanderer asserts the hollowness of all national grandeur if unsupported by moral worth.<sup>4</sup>—Physical science unable to support itself.—Lamentations over an excess of manufacturing industry among the humbler Classes of Society.—Picture of a Child employed in a Cotton-mill.—Ignorance and degradation of Children among the agricultural Population reviewed.—Conversation broken off by a renewed Invitation from the Pastor.—Path leading to his House.—Its appearance described.—His Daughter.—His Wife.—His Son (a Boy) enters with his Companion.—Their happy appearance.—The Wanderer how affected by the sight of them.

THE pensive Sceptic of the lonely vale  
To those acknowledgments subscribed his own,  
With a sedate compliance, which the Priest  
Failed not to notice, inly pleased, and said:—  
“If ye, by whom invited I began 5  
These narratives of calm and humble life,  
Be satisfied, 'tis well,—the end is gained;  
And in return for sympathy bestowed  
And patient listening, thanks accept from me.  
—Life, death, eternity! momentous themes 10  
Are they—and might demand a seraph's tongue,  
Were they not equal to their own support;  
And therefore no incompetence of mine  
Could do them wrong. The universal forms  
Of human nature, in a spot like this, 15

<sup>1</sup> apology and *added* 1837                      <sup>2</sup> with the Pastor's *added* 1837  
<sup>3</sup> *so* 1837: somewhat playfully 1814–32                      <sup>4</sup> *so* 1837: worth—gives  
Instances 1814–32

5 began 1837: commenced MS., 1814–32                      6 These 1827: Those  
MS., 1814–20                      9 accept] are due MS.                      10 Life] Time MS.  
11 they MS., 1827: these 1814–20 demand] require MS.  
13–16 And the main outline and the general form  
Of man's condition in a spot like this  
Presents itself *etc.* MS.

Present themselves at once to all men's view:  
 Ye wished for act and circumstance, that make  
 The individual known and understood;  
 And such as my best judgment could select  
 From what the place afforded, have been given; 20  
 Though apprehensions crossed me that my zeal  
 To his might well be likened, who unlocks  
 A cabinet stored with gems and pictures—draws  
 His treasures forth, soliciting regard  
 To this, and this, as worthier than the last, 25  
 Till the spectator, who awhile was pleased  
 More than the exhibitor himself, becomes  
 Weary and faint, and longs to be released.  
 —But let us hence! my dwelling is in sight,  
 And there—”

At this the Solitary shrunk 30  
 With backward will; but, wanting not address  
 That inward motion to disguise, he said  
 To his Compatriot, smiling as he spake;  
 —“The peaceable remains of this good Knight  
 Would be disturbed, I fear, with wrathful scorn, 35  
 If consciousness could reach him where he lies  
 That one, albeit of these degenerate times,  
 Deploping changes past, or dreading change  
 Foreseen, had dared to couple, even in thought,  
 The fine vocation of the sword and lance 40  
 With the gross aims and body-bending toil  
 Of a poor brotherhood who walk the earth  
 Pitied, and, where they are not known, despised.

“Yet, by the good Knight's leave, the two estates  
 Are graced with some resemblance. Errant those, 45

21-4 *so* 1837: Though apprehensions crossed me, in the course  
 Of this self-pleasing exercise, that Ye  
 My zeal to his would liken, who, possessed  
 Of some rare gems, or pictures finely wrought,  
 Unlocks his Cabinet, and draws them forth  
 One after one,—soliciting regard 1814-20  
 Yet there were times, I frankly will confess,  
 When apprehensions, *etc. as* 1814, MS.  
 My zeal to his would liken, who unlocks  
 A Cabinet with gems or pictures stored,  
 And draws them forth—soliciting regard 1827: 21-2 *as*  
 1837, 23-4 *as* 1827, 1832

Exiles and wanderers—and the like are these ;  
 Who, with their burthen, traverse hill and dale,  
 Carrying relief for nature's simple wants.  
 —What though no higher recompense be sought  
 Than honest maintenance, by irksome toil 50  
 Full oft procured, yet may they claim respect,  
 Among the intelligent, for what this course  
 Enables them to be and to perform.  
 Their tardy steps give leisure to observe,  
 While solitude permits the mind to feel ; 55  
 Instructs, and prompts her to supply defects  
 By the division of her inward self  
 For grateful converse: and to these poor men  
 Nature (I but repeat your favourite boast)  
 Is bountiful—go wheresoe'er they may ; 60  
 Kind nature's various wealth is all their own.  
 Versed in the characters of men ; and bound,  
 By ties of daily interest, to maintain  
 Conciliatory manners and smooth speech ;  
 Such have been, and still are in their degree, 65  
 Examples efficacious to refine  
 Rude intercourse ; apt agents to expel,  
 By importation of unlooked-for arts,  
 Barbarian torpor, and blind prejudice ;  
 Raising, through just gradation, savage life 70  
 To rustic, and the rustic to urbane.

- 46 these] ye MS. 47-8 . . . your burthen, among these lonely  
 wilds Pass for relief of MS. 48/9 Cheered by good fortune,—to mishap  
 exposed MS. 49 be sought 1837: they seek 1814-32 51  
 may they] 1837: such may MS., 1814-32 54 Yet your slow steps  
 MS. 56 so 1827: And doth instruct her MS., 1814-20  
 59-60 so 1837: (As I have heard you boast with honest pride)  
 Nature is bountiful, where'er they go, MS., 1814-32  
 60/1 For them, if not for others more at ease  
 Birds warble, rivers run, and fragrant smells  
 Rise from the bosom of the stedfast earth,  
 Or pass and meet them, wafted on the breeze MS.  
 63 ties 1832: tie MS., 1814-20  
 66-71 Apt instruments to soften and refine  
 Rude minds, and savage torpor to dispel  
 By importation of unlook'd for arts  
 And penetrating force of new desires. MS.  
 { Apt instruments for raising savage life  
 { To rustic and the rustic to urbane MS. *alt.*  
 67 agents to expel 1827: Instruments to excite 1814-20

—Within their moving magazines is lodged  
 Power that comes forth to quicken and exalt  
 Affections seated in the mother's breast,  
 And in the lover's fancy; and to feed 75  
 The sober sympathies of long-tried friends.  
 —By these Itinerants, as experienced men,  
 Counsel is given; contention they appease  
 With gentle language; in remotest wilds,  
 Tears wipe away, and pleasant tidings bring; 80  
 Could the proud quest of chivalry do more?"

"Happy," rejoined the Wanderer, "they who gain  
 A panegyric from your generous tongue!  
 But, if to these Wayfarers once pertained  
 Aught of romantic interest, it is gone. 85  
 Their purer service, in this realm at least,  
 Is past for ever.—An inventive Age  
 Has wrought, if not with speed of magic, yet  
 To most strange issues. I have lived to mark  
 A new and unforeseen creation rise 90  
 From out the labours of a peaceful Land  
 Wielding her potent enginery to frame  
 And to produce, with appetite as keen  
 As that of war, which rests not night or day,  
 Industrious to destroy! With fruitless pains 95  
 Might one like me *now* visit many a tract  
 Which, in his youth, he trod, and trod again,  
 A lone pedestrian with a scanty freight,  
 Wished-for, or welcome, wheresoe'er he came—  
 Among the tenantry of thorpe and vill; 100  
 Or straggling burgh, of ancient charter proud,  
 And dignified by battlements and towers  
 Of some stern castle, mouldering on the brow  
 Of a green hill or bank of rugged stream.

74 Affections 1827: The affections 1814–20: The pure affections in the mother's breast MS. 79 *so* 1827: With healing words; and, in remotest Wilds MS., 1814–20 81 What could the pride MS.

85 it is 1837: 'tis MS., 1814–32  
 95–7 . . . fruitless search

Now might I look for many a rugged path  
 And horse-track wild, and formidable lane  
 Which not unthankfully in youth I trod MS.  
 99 he] I MS. 100–6 added to MS.

The foot-path faintly marked, the horse-track wild, 105  
 And formidable length of plashy lane,  
 (Prized avenues ere others had been shaped  
 Or easier links connecting place with place)  
 Have vanished—swallowed up by stately roads  
 Easy and bold, that penetrate the gloom 110  
 Of Britain's farthest glens. The Earth has lent  
 Her waters, Air her breezes; and the sail  
 Of traffic glides with ceaseless intercourse,  
 Glistening along the low and woody dale;  
 Or, in its progress, on the lofty side 115  
 Of some bare hill, with wonder kenned from far.

“Meanwhile, at social Industry's command,  
 How quick, how vast an increase! From the germ  
 Of some poor hamlet, rapidly produced  
 Here a huge town, continuous and compact, 120  
 Hiding the face of earth for leagues—and there,  
 Where not a habitation stood before,  
 Abodes of men irregularly massed  
 Like trees in forests,—spread through spacious tracts,  
 O'er which the smoke of unremitting fires 125  
 Hangs permanent, and plentiful as wreaths  
 Of vapour glittering in the morning sun.  
 And, wheresoe'er the traveller turns his steps,  
 He sees the barren wilderness erased,  
 Or disappearing; triumph that proclaims 130  
 How much the mild Directress of the plough  
 Owes to alliance with these new-born arts!  
 —Hence is the wide sea peopled,—hence the shores  
 Of Britain are resorted to by ships  
 Freight from every climate of the world 135  
 With the world's choicest produce. Hence that sum  
 Of keels that rest within her crowded ports,  
 Or ride at anchor in her sounds and bays;

107 These prized when other avenue was none MS. 109-10 . . .  
 giving way to ample roads Stately etc. MS. 111 Britain's 1827:  
 England's MS., 1814-20 113 intercourse 1837: interchange MS.,  
 1814-32 115-16 so 1837: Or on the naked mountain's lofty side.  
 MS., 1814-32 123 so 1827: The abodes MS., 1814-20 133-4 and  
 the shores Of Britain hence are sought by gallant Ships MS. 133  
 hence 1827: and 1814-20 136/7 Of maritime grandeur and internal  
 wealth, MS. 137 The keels that rest at anchor in her ports MS.

That animating spectacle of sails  
 That, through her inland regions, to and fro 140  
 Pass with the respirations of the tide,  
 Perpetual, multitudinous! Finally,  
 Hence a dread arm of floating power, a voice  
 Of thunder daunting those who would approach  
 With hostile purposes the blessèd Isle, 145  
 Truth's consecrated residence, the seat  
 Impregnable of Liberty and Peace.

“And yet, O happy Pastor of a flock  
 Faithfully watched, and, by that loving care  
 And Heaven's good providence, preserved from taint! 150  
 With you I grieve, when on the darker side  
 Of this great change I look; and there behold  
 Such outrage done to nature as compels  
 The indignant power to justify herself;  
 Yea, to avenge her violated rights, 155  
 For England's bane.—When soothing darkness spreads  
 O'er hill and vale,” the Wanderer thus expressed  
 His recollections, “and the punctual stars,  
 While all things else are gathering to their homes,  
 Advance, and in the firmament of heaven 160  
 Glitter—but undisturbing, undisturbed;  
 As if their silent company were charged  
 With peaceful admonitions for the heart  
 Of all-beholding Man, earth's thoughtful lord;  
 Then, in full many a region, once like this 165  
 The assured domain of calm simplicity  
 And pensive quiet, an unnatural light  
 Prepared for never-resting Labour's eyes  
 Breaks from a many-windowed fabric huge;  
 And at the appointed hour a bell is heard, 170  
 Of harsher import than the curfew-knoll

139 That] An MS. 152/3 Through strong temptation of these self-  
 same arts MS.: so 1814–20 but those gainful for these self-same

157–8 O'er hill and valley and the Punctual Stars MS.

164–5 Now that another of his toilsome days  
 Is past, and Time has left another step  
 To be recorded in his noiseless march  
 Towards Eternity, and sweet Repose  
 Scatters her weary blessing, and by thanks  
 And Prayer preceded holy sleep descends, MS.

That spake the Norman Conqueror's stern behest—  
 A local summons to unceasing toil!  
 Disgorged are now the ministers of day;  
 And, as they issue from the illumined pile, 175  
 A fresh band meets them, at the crowded door—  
 And in the courts—and where the rumbling stream,  
 That turns the multitude of dizzy wheels,  
 Glares, like a troubled spirit, in its bed  
 Among the rocks below. Men, maidens, youths, 180  
 Mother and little children, boys and girls,  
 Enter, and each the wonted task resumes  
 Within this temple, where is offered up  
 To Gain, the master-idol of the realm,  
 Perpetual sacrifice. Even thus of old 185  
 Our ancestors, within the still domain  
 Of vast cathedral or conventual church,  
 Their vigils kept; where tapers day and night  
 On the dim altar burned continually,  
 In token that the House was evermore 190  
 Watching to God. Religious men were they;  
 Nor would their reason, tutored to aspire  
 Above this transitory world, allow  
 That there should pass a moment of the year,  
 When in their land the Almighty's service ceased. 195

"Triumph who will in these profaner rites  
 Which we, a generation self-extolled,  
 As zealously perform! I cannot share  
 His proud complacency:—yet do I exult,  
 Casting reserve away, exult to see 200  
 An intellectual mastery exercised  
 O'er the blind elements; a purpose given,  
 A perseverance fed; almost a soul  
 Imparted—to brute matter. I rejoice,

175 And, at the portals of MS. 182 To their accustomed services  
 repair MS., *corr. to text* 194 That a single moment of the year  
 should pass C

198–202 . . . I too will share  
 Thus far his proud complacency—[with him ?]  
 Casting reserve away will I rejoice  
 To see an intellectual Aim imposed  
 On the . . . MS.

199 so 1837: yet I exult 1814–32

Measuring the force of those gigantic powers 205  
 That, by the thinking mind, have been compelled  
 To serve the will of feeble-bodied Man.  
 For with the sense of admiration blends  
 The animating hope that time may come  
 When, strengthened, yet not dazzled, by the might 210  
 Of this dominion over nature gained,  
 Men of all lands shall exercise the same  
 In due proportion to their country's need ;  
 Learning, though late, that all true glory rests,  
 All praise, all safety, and all happiness, 215  
 Upon the moral law. Egyptian Thebes,  
 Tyre, by the margin of the sounding waves,  
 Palmyra, central in the desert, fell ;  
 And the Arts died by which they had been raised.  
 —Call Archimedes from his buried tomb 220  
 Upon the grave of vanished Syracuse,  
 And feelingly the Sage shall make report  
 How insecure, how baseless in itself,  
 Is the Philosophy whose sway depends  
 On mere material instruments ;—how weak 225  
 Those arts, and high inventions, if unpropped  
 By virtue.—He, sighing with pensive grief,  
 Amid his calm abstractions, would admit  
 That not the slender privilege is theirs  
 To save themselves from blank forgetfulness!" 230

When from the Wanderer's lips these words had fallen,  
 I said, "And, did in truth those vaunted Arts  
 Possess such privilege, how could we escape  
 Sadness and keen regret, we who revere,  
 And would preserve as things above all price, 235  
 The old domestic morals of the land,

207 will] needs MS.

208-9 Yet should I deem this [ ? ] too dearly bought

Unless I dared to hope that time may come MS.

221 grave 1837: plain MS., 1814-32

224-5 so 1827: sway is

framed For MS., 1814-20

227 sighing with 1845: with sighs of

MS., 1814-43

231-4 Meanwhile shall we give way to empty joy

And inconsiderate boasting, who revere MS.

232 those 1837: these 1814-32

234 so 1837: Regret and painful

sadness, who revere 1814-32

Her simple manners, and the stable worth  
 That dignified and cheered a low estate ?  
 Oh ! where is now the character of peace,  
 Sobriety, and order, and chaste love, 240  
 And honest dealing, and untainted speech,  
 And pure good-will, and hospitable cheer ;  
 That made the very thought of country-life  
 A thought of refuge, for a mind detained  
 Reluctantly amid the bustling crowd ? 245  
 Where now the beauty of the sabbath kept  
 With conscientious reverence, as a day  
 By the almighty Lawgiver pronounced  
 Holy and blest ? and where the winning grace  
 Of all the lighter ornaments attached 250  
 To time and season, as the year rolled round ?"

"Fled!" was the Wanderer's passionate response,  
 "Fled utterly! or only to be traced  
 In a few fortunate retreats like this ;  
 Which I behold with trembling, when I think 255  
 What lamentable change, a year—a month—  
 May bring ; that brook converting as it runs  
 Into an instrument of deadly bane  
 For whose, who, yet untempted to forsake  
 The simple occupations of their sires, 260  
 Drink the pure water of its innocent stream  
 With lip almost as pure.—Domestic bliss  
 (Or call it comfort, by a humbler name,)

How art thou blighted for the poor Man's heart !  
 Lo ! in such neighbourhood, from morn to eve, 265  
 The habitations empty ! or perchance  
 The Mother left alone,—no helping hand  
 To rock the cradle of her peevish babe ;  
 No daughters round her, busy at the wheel,

237-9 . . . manners, yet are doomed to see

The objects of our reverential love  
 Perish as Victims, and Oblations brought  
 To an insatiate Idol whom the State  
 Worships with sanction for that worship drawn  
 From treacherous Thievery. O where is now  
 The worth, the stable worth, that dignified  
 A low estate, the character of peace, MS.

252 *not in MS.*

265 Lo ! in the fields and hamlets all day long MS.

Or in dispatch of each day's little growth 270  
 Of household occupation ; no nice arts  
 Of needle-work ; no bustle at the fire,  
 Where once the dinner was prepared with pride ;  
 Nothing to speed the day, or cheer the mind ;  
 Nothing to praise, to teach, or to command ! 275

“The Father, if perchance he still retain  
 His old employments, goes to field or wood,  
 No longer led or followed by the Sons ;  
 Idlers perchance they were,—but in *his* sight ;  
 Breathing fresh air, and treading the green earth ; 280  
 Till their short holiday of childhood ceased,  
 Ne'er to return ! That birthright now is lost.  
 Economists will tell you that the State  
 Thrives by the forfeiture—unfeeling thought,  
 And false as monstrous ! Can the mother thrive 285  
 By the destruction of her innocent sons  
 In whom a premature necessity  
 Blocks out the forms of nature, preconsumes  
 The reason, famishes the heart, shuts up  
 The infant Being in itself, and makes 290  
 Its very spring a season of decay !  
 The lot is wretched, the condition sad,  
 Whether a pining discontent survive,

278 the Sons 1820: his Sons MS., 1814

283-7 There is a law severe of penury

Which bends the Cottage boy to early thought,

To thought whose premature necessity MS. 18<sup>a</sup>

292-302 Oh miserable lot ! condition sad !

Which terminates the hour of careless joy

So soon, that it is lost to memory,

To the old Man a time that never was,

And even if on some week-day festival

Or by the sabbath fire the parent's heart

Turn with a fond good-humoured tenderness

To days that are long past, the Stripling hears

The tale of that sweet season, what he said,

And what he did, his marvellous feats and freaks,

His wisdom and his wit,—he hears them all

With languid interest as a thing detached

From his own life—O miserable state !

Then liberty is not and cannot be,

But wheresoe'er he turns his steps the boy MS. 18<sup>a</sup>

And thirst for change; or habit hath subdued  
 The soul deprest, dejected—even to love 295  
 Of her close tasks, and long captivity.

“Oh, banish far such wisdom as condemns  
 A native Briton to these inward chains,  
 Fixed in his soul, so early and so deep;  
 Without his own consent, or knowledge, fixed! 300  
 He is a slave to whom release comes not,  
 And cannot come. The boy, where’er he turns,  
 Is still a prisoner; when the wind is up  
 Among the clouds, and roars through the ancient woods;  
 Or when the sun is shining in the east, 305  
 Quiet and calm. Behold him—in the school  
 Of his attainments? no; but with the air  
 Fanning his temples under heaven’s blue arch.  
 His raiment, whitened o’er with cotton-flakes  
 Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes. 310  
 Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip pale,  
 His respiration quick and audible;  
 And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam  
 Could break from out those languid eyes, or a blush  
 Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form, 315  
 Is that the countenance, and such the port,  
 Of no mean Being? One who should be clothed  
 With dignity befitting his proud hope;  
 Who, in his very childhood, should appear  
 Sublime from present purity and joy! 320  
 The limbs increase; but liberty of mind

296 *so* 1837: Of her (those MS.) dull tasks and close captivity 1814–32  
 297 Oh guard me from MS. 298 A Briton born to these internal  
 chains MS. 304 roars through 1837: in MSS., 1814–32 305  
*so* 1827: rising in the heavens MSS., 1814–20 306–15 (*middle*) not  
 in MS. 184

306–9 On path or public road, his raiment soiled

And whitened o’er with cotton flakes re[?] MS.

314 *so* 1837: From out those languid eyes could (From out those eyes could  
 ever MS.) break, or blush MS., 1814–32 315 Are these the looks,  
 MSS.

321–3 *so* 1845: 1837–43 *omit* liberty . . . and, *and for joyful read* gladsome  
 The limbs increase, but while with freedom lost  
 Thought pines and dwindles this organic frame C

Is gone for ever ; and this organic frame,  
 So joyful in its motions, is become  
 Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead ;  
 And even the touch, so exquisitely poured 325  
 Through the whole body, with a languid will  
 Performs its functions ; rarely competent  
 To impress a vivid feeling on the mind  
 Of what there is delightful in the breeze,  
 The gentle visitations of the sun, 330  
 Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,  
 Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—perceived.  
 —Can hope look forward to a manhood raised  
 On such foundations ?”

“Hope is none for him !”

The pale Recluse indignantly exclaimed, 335  
 “And tens of thousands suffer wrong as deep.  
 Yet be it asked, in justice to our age,  
 If there were not, before those arts appeared,  
 These structures rose, commingling old and young,  
 And unripe sex with sex, for mutual taint ; 340  
 If there were not, *then*, in our far-famed Isle,  
 Multitudes, who from infancy had breathed  
 Air unimprisoned, and had lived at large ;  
 Yet walked beneath the sun, in human shape,  
 As abject, as degraded ? At this day, 345  
 Who shall enumerate the crazy huts  
 And tottering hovels, whence do issue forth  
 A ragged Offspring, with their upright hair

322-3 *so* 1845: Thus gone for ever, this organic Frame  
 Which from Heaven's bounty we receive, instinct  
 With light and gladsome motions, soon becomes 1814-20:

1837 *as* 1845 *but* gladsome *for* joyful

322 Is gone for ever, and the avenues

Of sense impeded, (are clogg'd and MS. 18<sup>a</sup>) this organic frame MSS.  
 323 *its* 1837: *her* 1827 324 *her*] *its* MSS. 327 *its* 1814, 1820,  
 1837-50: *her* 1827-32

327-32 Performs its functions, in the basking hour

Scarce carrying to the brain a torpid sense

Of what there is delightful in the breeze

The sunshine or the changeful elements MS. 18<sup>a</sup>

328 To impress a faint perception on the brain MS. 341 *so* 1837:

Then if there were not 1814-32: and are not at this day MS. 347

Or clay-built hovels MS. 348 upright 1837: own blanched MS.,  
 1814-32

Crowned like the image of fantastic Fear ;  
 Or wearing, (shall we say ?) in that white growth 350  
 An ill-adjusted turban, for defence  
 Or fierceness, wreathed around their sunburnt brows,  
 By savage Nature ? Shrivelled are their lips ;  
 Naked, and coloured like the soil, the feet  
 On which they stand ; as if thereby they drew 355  
 Some nourishment, as trees do by their roots,  
 From earth, the common mother of us all.  
 Figure and mien, complexion and attire,  
 Are leagued to strike dismay ; but outstretched hand  
 And whining voice denote them supplicants 360  
 For the least boon that pity can bestow.  
 Such on the breast of darksome heaths are found ;  
 And with their parents occupy the skirts  
 Of furze-clad commons ; such are born and reared  
 At the mine's mouth under impending rocks ; 365  
 Or dwell in chambers of some natural cave ;  
 Or where their ancestors erected huts,  
 For the convenience of unlawful gain,  
 In forest purlieus ; and the like are bred,  
 All England through, where nooks and slips of ground 370  
 Purloined, in times less jealous than our own,  
 From the green margin of the public way,  
 A residence afford them, 'mid the bloom  
 And gaiety of cultivated fields.  
 Such (we will hope the lowest in the scale) 375  
 Do I remember oft-times to have seen  
 'Mid Buxton's dreary heights. In earnest watch,  
 Till the swift vehicle approach, they stand ;  
 Then, following closely with the cloud of dust,  
 An uncouth feat exhibit, and are gone 380

350 so 1837: wearing, we might say. 1814-32  
 savage Nature's unassisted care. MS., 1814-32  
 framed . . . but the outstretched MS., 1814-20  
 1837: dwell upon 1814-32

353 so 1837: By  
 359 so 1827: Are  
 363 occupy

363-77 In forest pastures and in sheltered lanes  
 Among the pride of cultivated fields  
 And such do I remember to have seen

On Buxton's dreary heights. Upon the watch MS.

364 such 1827: and 1814-20 365 under 1837: beneath 1814-  
 32 366 dwell in 1837: in the 1814-32 377 so 1837: Upon  
 the watch MS., 1814-32

Heels over head, like tumblers on a stage.  
 —Up from the ground they snatch the copper coin,  
 And, on the freight of merry passengers  
 Fixing a steady eye, maintain their speed;  
 And spin—and pant—and overhead again, 385  
 Wild pursuivants! until their breath is lost,  
 Or bounty tires—and every face, that smiled  
 Encouragement, hath ceased to look that way.  
 —But, like the vagrants of the gipsy tribe,  
 These, bred to little pleasure in themselves, 390  
 Are profitless to others.

Turn we then  
 To Britons born and bred within the pale  
 Of civil polity, and early trained  
 To earn, by wholesome labour in the field,  
 The bread they eat. A sample should I give 395  
 Of what this stock hath long produced to enrich  
 The tender age of life, ye would exclaim,  
 'Is this the whistling plough-boy whose shrill notes  
 Impart new gladness to the morning air!'  
 Forgive me if I venture to suspect 400  
 That many, sweet to hear of in soft verse,  
 Are of no finer frame. Stiff are his joints;  
 Beneath a cumbrous frock, that to the knees  
 Invests the thriving churl, his legs appear,  
 Fellows to those that lustily upheld 405  
 The wooden stools for everlasting use,  
 Whereon our fathers sate. And mark his brow!  
 Under whose shaggy canopy are set  
 Two eyes—not dim, but of a healthy stare—  
 Wide, sluggish, blank, and ignorant, and strange— 410  
 Proclaiming boldly that they never drew  
 A look or motion of intelligence  
 From infant-conning of the Christ-cross-row,  
 Or puzzling through a primer, line by line,

386 till they have lost their breath MS. 392 To such as fairly born  
 MS.

396-7 so 1837: . . . produces to enrich

And beautify the tender age of life,

A sample fairly called, MS., 1814-20: produces to enrich

The tender age of life 1827-32

402 so 1837: frame:—his joints are stiff MS., 1814-32 409 healthy]

vacant C 410 line added in C and 1840

Till perfect mastery crown the pains at last. 415  
 —What kindly warmth from touch of fostering hand,  
 What penetrating power of sun or breeze,  
 Shall e'er dissolve the crust wherein his soul  
 Sleeps, like a caterpillar sheathed in ice ?  
 This torpor is no pitiable work 420  
 Of modern ingenuity ; no town  
 Nor crowded city can be taxed with aught  
 Of sottish vice or desperate breach of law,  
 To which (and who can tell where or how soon ?)  
 He may be roused. This Boy the fields produce : 425  
 His spade and hoe, mattock and glittering scythe,  
 The carter's whip that on his shoulder rests  
 In air high-towering with a boorish pomp,  
 The sceptre of his sway ; his country's name,  
 Her equal rights, her churches and her schools— 430  
 What have they done for him ? And, let me ask,  
 For tens of thousands uninformed as he ?  
 In brief, what liberty of *mind* is here ?”

This ardent sally pleased the mild good Man,  
 To whom the appeal couched in its closing words 435  
 Was pointedly addressed ; and to the thoughts  
 That, in assent or opposition, rose  
 Within his mind, he seemed prepared to give  
 Prompt utterance ; but the Vicar interposed  
 With invitation urgently renewed. 440  
 —We followed, taking as he led, a path  
 Along a hedge of hollies dark and tall,  
 Whose flexile boughs low bending with a weight  
 Of leafy spray, concealed the stems and roots

420 pitiable] lamentable MS. 422 can 1837: may MS., 1814–32  
 424–6 so 1837: To which in after years he may be roused.

—This Boy the Fields produce: his spade and hoe, MS.,  
 1814–32

434 ardent 1827: cheerful MS., 1814–20 435 its 1827: those  
 MS., 1814–20 closing] final MS.

439 so 1837: . . . rising from our seat

Beneath the umbrage of those Church-yard trees

The hospitable Vicar interposed MS., so 1814–32, but omitting  
 middle line

440 urgently 1827: earnestly MS., 1814–20 442 so 1827: stately  
 hollies framed MS., 1814–20 443 low bending 1837: descending  
 MS., 1814–32

That gave them nourishment. When frosty winds 445  
 Howl from the north, what kindly warmth, methought,  
 Is here—how grateful this impervious screen!  
 —Not shaped by simple wearing of the foot  
 On rural business passing to and fro  
 Was the commodious walk: a careful hand 450  
 Had marked the line, and strewn its surface o'er  
 With pure cerulean gravel, from the heights  
 Fetched by a neighbouring brook.—Across the vale  
 The stately fence accompanied our steps;  
 And thus the pathway, by perennial green 455  
 Guarded and graced, seemed fashioned to unite,  
 As by a beautiful yet solemn chain,  
 The Pastor's mansion with the house of prayer.

Like image of solemnity, conjoined  
 With feminine allurements soft and fair, 460  
 The mansion's self displayed;—a reverend pile  
 With bold projections and recesses deep;  
 Shadowy, yet gay and lightsome as it stood  
 Fronting the noontide sun. We paused to admire  
 The pillared porch, elaborately embossed; 465  
 The low wide windows with their mullions old;  
 The cornice, richly fretted, of grey stone;  
 And that smooth slope from which the dwelling rose,  
 By beds and banks Arcadian of gay flowers  
 And flowering shrubs, protected and adorned: 470  
 Profusion bright! and every flower assuming  
 A more than natural vividness of hue  
 From unaffected contrast with the gloom  
 Of sober cypress, and the darker foil  
 Of yew, in which survived some traces, here 475  
 Not unbecoming, of grotesque device

445-7 so 1827: How sweet methought,  
 When the fierce wind comes howling from the north,  
 How grateful this impenetrable screen! MS., 1814-20

450-3 . . . walk (that wound along  
 As through a pleasure ground, from field to field)  
 For here a careful Hand had been employed  
 To mark the line and strew the surface o'er  
 With purest gravel from the mountain brook MS.

451, 453 its . . . a 1837: the . . . the MS., 1814-32 471 not in  
 MS. 473 The bright flowers took from contrast MS.

And uncouth fancy. From behind the roof  
 Rose the slim ash and massy sycamore,  
 Blending their diverse foliage with the green  
 Of ivy, flourishing and thick, that clasped 480  
 The huge round chimneys, harbour of delight  
 For wren and redbreast,—where they sit and sing  
 Their slender ditties when the trees are bare.  
 Nor must I leave untouched (the picture else  
 Were incomplete) a relique of old times 485  
 Happily spared, a little Gothic niche  
 Of nicest workmanship; that once had held  
 The sculptured image of some patron-saint,  
 Or of the blessed Virgin, looking down  
 On all who entered those religious doors. 490

But lo! where from the rocky garden-mount  
 Crowned by its antique summer-house—descends,  
 Light as the silver fawn, a radiant Girl;  
 For she hath recognised her honoured friend,  
 The Wanderer ever welcome! A prompt kiss 495  
 The gladsome child bestows at his request;  
 And, up the flowery lawn as we advance,  
 Hangs on the old Man with a happy look,  
 And with a pretty restless hand of love.  
 —We enter—by the Lady of the place 500  
 Cordially greeted. Graceful was her port:  
 A lofty stature undepressed by time,  
 Whose visitation had not wholly spared  
 The finer lineaments of form and face;  
 To that complexion brought which prudence trusts in 505  
 And wisdom loves.—But when a stately ship  
 Sails in smooth weather by the placid coast  
 On homeward voyage,—what if wind and wave,

477 uncouth] antique MS.

484–5 so 1827: . . . pass unnoticed (leaving else

The picture incomplete, as it appeared  
 Before our eyes) MS., 1814–20

500–1 so 1827: We enter;—need I tell the courteous guise

In which the Lady of the place received

Our little Band, with salutation meet

To each accorded? (Graceful etc. 1814–20

503 so 1827: had not spared to touch 1814–20

504 form 1827:

frame 1814–20

And hardship undergone in various climes,  
 Have caused her to abate the virgin pride, 510  
 And that full trim of inexperienced hope  
 With which she left her haven—not for this,  
 Should the sun strike her, and the impartial breeze  
 Play on her streamers, fails she to assume  
 Brightness and touching beauty of her own, 515  
 That charm all eyes. So bright, so fair, appeared  
 This godly Matron, shining in the beams  
 Of unexpected pleasure.—Soon the board  
 Was spread, and we partook a plain repast.

Here, resting in cool shelter, we beguiled 520  
 The mid-day hours with desultory talk;  
 From trivial themes to general argument  
 Passing, as accident or fancy led,  
 Or courtesy prescribed. While question rose  
 And answer flowed, the fetters of reserve 525  
 Dropping from every mind, the Solitary  
 Resumed the manners of his happier days;  
 And in the various conversation bore  
 A willing, nay, at times, a forward part;  
 Yet with the grace of one who in the world 530  
 Had learned the art of pleasing, and had now  
 Occasion given him to display his skill,  
 Upon the stedfast 'vantage-ground of truth.  
 He gazed, with admiration unsuppressed,  
 Upon the landscape of the sun-bright vale, 535  
 Seen, from the shady room in which we sate,

514 fails she 1827: doth she fail 1814–20 516 so fair 1827: to us  
 1814–20

520 *so* 1827: Here in cool shelter, while the scorching heat  
 Oppressed the fields, we sate, and entertained 1814–20

520–45 But now when we had ended our repast  
 And one was looking leisurely abroad  
 Upon the living scene, hills, woods, and lake  
 Bright in the sun, and one, perhaps, content  
 To scan the internal comeliness and grace  
 Of that antique apartment where we sate,  
 Its shining furniture and portraits old  
 Till suddenly our willing eyes were called  
 To other entertainment, for the door  
 Opening, with eager haste two lusty boys MS.

526 *so* 1827: Dropped from our minds; and even the shy Recluse 1814–20

- In softened perspective ; and more than once  
 Praised the consummate harmony serene  
 Of gravity and elegance, diffused  
 Around the mansion and its whole domain ; 540  
 Not, doubtless, without help of female taste  
 And female care.—“A blessed lot is yours!”  
 The words escaped his lip, with a tender sigh  
 Breathed over them : but suddenly the door  
 Flew open, and a pair of lusty Boys 545  
 Appeared, confusion checking their delight.  
 —Not brothers they in feature or attire,  
 But fond companions, so I guessed, in field,  
 And by the river’s margin—whence they come,  
 Keen anglers with unusual spoil elated. 550  
 One bears a willow-pannier on his back,  
 The boy of plainer garb, whose blush survives  
 More deeply tinged. Twin might the other be  
 To that fair girl who from the garden-mountain  
 Bounded :—triumphant entry this for him ! 555  
 Between his hands he holds a smooth blue stone,  
 On whose capacious surface see outspread  
 Large store of gleaming crimson-spotted trouts ;  
 Ranged side by side, and lessening by degrees  
 Up to the dwarf that tops the pinnacle. 560  
 Upon the board he lays the sky-blue stone  
 With its rich freight ; their number he proclaims ;
- 543-5 so 1827: He said, and with that exclamation breathed  
 A tender sigh ;—but suddenly the door *etc. as MS. supra*,  
 1814-20
- 549-50 so 1836: And by the river-side—from which they came  
 A pair of Anglers, laden with their spoil. MS., 1814-20  
 And by the river’s margin—whence they came  
 Anglers elated with unusual spoil. 1827-32
- 552-5 so 1827: The Boy of plainer garb, and more abashed  
 In countenance,—more distant and retired.  
 Twin might the Other be to that fair Girl  
 Who bounded tow’rds (towards 1820) us from the garden  
 mountain.  
 Triumphant entry this to him !—for see, 1814-20 ; so MS.,  
*but* In look at least more shy and more retired
- 557 see 1827: is 1814-20
- 559 so 1827: Ranged side by side, in regular ascent,  
 (The lordliest first, and then of smaller size MS.)  
 One after one, still lessening by degrees MS., 1814-20
- 562 freight 1827: spoil MS., 1814-20

Tells from what pool the noblest had been dragged ;  
 And where the very monarch of the brook,  
 After long struggle, had escaped at last— 565  
 Stealing alternately at them and us  
 (As doth his comrade too) a look of pride:  
 And, verily, the silent creatures made  
 A splendid sight, together thus exposed ;  
 Dead—but not sullied or deformed by death, 570  
 That seemed to pity what he could not spare.

But O, the animation in the mien  
 Of those two boys! yea in the very words  
 With which the young narrator was inspired,  
 When, as our questions led, he told at large 575  
 Of that day's prowess! Him might I compare,  
 His looks, tones, gestures, eager eloquence,  
 To a bold brook that splits for better speed,  
 And at the self-same moment, works its way  
 Through many channels, ever and anon 580  
 Parted and re-united: his compeer  
 To the still lake, whose stillness is to sight  
 As beautiful—as grateful to the mind.  
 —But to what object shall the lovely Girl  
 Be likened? She whose countenance and air 585  
 Unite the graceful qualities of both,  
 Even as she shares the pride and joy of both.

My grey-haired Friend was moved; his vivid eye  
 Glistened with tenderness; his mind, I knew,  
 Was full; and had, I doubted not, returned, 590  
 Upon this impulse, to the theme—erewhile  
 Abruptly broken off. The ruddy boys  
 Withdrew, on summons to their well-earned meal;  
 And He—to whom all tongues resigned their rights  
 With willingness, to whom the general ear 595

567 As . . . too] Nor . . . less MS. 577 looks 1837: look 1814-32

582 to sight 1827: to the eye MS., 1814-20

587 Even as to spurious sensibility

Untrained, she shares *etc.* MS.

593 so 1827: Did now withdraw to take MS., 1814-20

Listened with readier patience than to strain  
Of music, lute or harp, a long delight  
That ceased not when his voice had ceased—as One  
Who from truth's central point serenely views  
The compass of his argument—began 600  
Mildly, and with a clear and steady tone.

599 Who from an Eminence MS.

# BOOK NINTH

## DISCOURSE OF THE WANDERER AND AN EVENING VISIT TO THE LAKE

### ARGUMENT

Wanderer asserts that an active principle pervades the Universe, its noblest seat the human soul.—How lively this principle is in Childhood.—Hence the delight in old Age of looking back upon Childhood.—The dignity, powers, and privileges of Age asserted.—These not to be looked for generally but under a just government.—Right of a human Creature to be exempt from being considered as a mere Instrument.<sup>1</sup>—The condition of multitudes deplored.<sup>2</sup>—Former conversation recurred to, and the Wanderer's opinions set in a clearer light.<sup>3</sup>—Truth placed within reach of the humblest.—Equality.<sup>4</sup>—Happy state of the two Boys again adverted to.—Earnest wish expressed for a System of National Education established universally by Government.—Glorious effects of this foretold.<sup>5</sup>—Walk to the Lake.—Grand spectacle from the side of a hill.—Address of Priest to the Supreme Being—in the course of which he contrasts with ancient Barbarism the present appearance of the scene before him.—The change ascribed to Christianity.—Apostrophe to his flock, living and dead.—Gratitude to the Almighty.—Return over the Lake.—Parting with the Solitary.—Under what circumstances.

“To every Form of being is assigned,”  
 Thus calmly spake the venerable Sage,  
 “An *active* Principle:—howe’er removed  
 From sense and observation, it subsists  
 In all things, in all natures; in the stars 5  
 Of azure heaven, the unenduring clouds,  
 In flower and tree, in every pebbly stone  
 That paves the brooks, the stationary rocks,  
 The moving waters, and the invisible air.  
 Whate’er exists hath properties that spread 10

<sup>1</sup> *so* 1837: Instrument—Vicious inclinations are best kept under by giving good ones an opportunity to shew themselves 1814–32.

<sup>2</sup> *so* 1837: deplored from want of due respect to this truth on the part of their superiors in society 1814–32. <sup>3</sup> *so* 1837: light—Genuine principles of equality 1814–32.  
<sup>4</sup> Equality *added* 1837.

<sup>5</sup> *so* 1837: foretold—Wanderer breaks off—Walk to the Lake—embark. Description of scenery and amusements 1814–32.

1–7 There is an active principle alive

In all things, in all natures, in the flowers  
 And in the trees *etc.* MS. 18<sup>a</sup>

10–12 All beings have their properties which spread

Beyond themselves, a power by which they make  
 Some other being conscious of their life, MS. 18<sup>a</sup>

Beyond itself, communicating good,  
 A simple blessing, or with evil mixed ;  
 Spirit that knows no insulated spot,  
 No chasm, no solitude ; from link to link  
 It circulates, the Soul of all the worlds. 15  
 This is the freedom of the universe ;  
 Unfolded still the more, more visible,  
 The more we know ; and yet is revered least,  
 And least respected in the human Mind,  
 Its most apparent home. The food of hope 20  
 Is meditated action ; robbed of this  
 Her sole support, she languishes and dies.  
 We perish also ; for we live by hope  
 And by desire ; we see by the glad light  
 And breathe the sweet air of futurity ; 25  
 And so we live, or else we have no life.  
 To-morrow—nay perchance this very hour  
 (For every moment hath its own to-morrow!)  
 Those blooming Boys, whose hearts are almost sick  
 With present triumph, will be sure to find 30  
 A field before them freshened with the dew  
 Of other expectations ;—in which course  
 Their happy year spins round. The youth obeys  
 A like glad impulse ; and so moves the man  
 'Mid all his apprehensions, cares, and fears,— 35  
 Or so he ought to move. Ah ! why in age  
 Do we revert so fondly to the walks  
 Of childhood—but that there the Soul discerns  
 The dear memorial footsteps unimpaired  
 Of her own native vigour ; thence can hear 40  
 Reverberations ; and a choral song,

11 Beyond itself, for evil or for good MS. 20 apparent] conspicuous MS.

24 And by desire ; they are the very blood

By which we move, we see by the sweet light MS. 18<sup>a</sup>

27-128 And 'tis expressed in colours of the sun

That we were never made to be content

With simple abstinence from ill, for chains,

For shackles and for bonds, but to be bound

By laws in which there is a generating soul

Allied to our own nature, and we know MS. 18<sup>a</sup>

28 hath 1820: has MS., 1814 40 thence can hear 1827:—but  
 for this, That it is given her thence in age to hear MS., 1814-20

Commingling with the incense that ascends,  
Undaunted, toward the imperishable heavens,  
From her own lonely altar ?

Do not think

That good and wise ever will be allowed, 45  
Though strength decay, to breathe in such estate  
As shall divide them wholly from the stir  
Of hopeful nature. Rightly it is said  
That Man descends into the VALE of years ;  
Yet have I thought that we might also speak, 50  
And not presumptuously, I trust, of Age,  
As of a final EMINENCE ; though bare  
In aspect and forbidding, yet a point  
On which 'tis not impossible to sit  
In awful sovereignty ; a place of power, 55  
A throne, that may be likened unto his,  
Who, in some placid day of summer, looks  
Down from a mountain-top,—say one of those  
High peaks, that bound the vale where now we are.  
Faint, and diminished to the gazing eye, 60  
Forest and field, and hill and dale appear,  
With all the shapes over their surface spread :  
But, while the gross and visible frame of things  
Relinquishes its hold upon the sense,  
Yea almost on the Mind herself, and seems 65  
All unsubstantialized,—how loud the voice  
Of waters, with invigorated peal  
From the full river in the vale below,  
Ascending ! For on that superior height  
Who sits, is disencumbered from the press 70  
Of near obstructions, and is privileged  
To breathe in solitude, above the host  
Of ever-humming insects, 'mid thin air  
That suits not them. The murmur of the leaves

43 toward 1837: tow'rds MS., 1814-20: tow'rd 1827-32 45  
ever will 1832: will ever MS., 1814-27 48 it is 1850: is it MS.,  
1814-45 56 that 1827: which MS., 1814-20 57 placid]  
gentle MS. 61 Of one so stationed, hill etc. MS. 62 over  
1845: upon 1814-43 65 herself 1827: itself MS., 1814-20  
68 From Brook and River MS. 69-72 Ascending—for he stands  
above the host MS. *corr. to*

... for who gains that lofty point  
Is privileged: he stands above the host

Many and idle, visits not his ear: 75  
 This he is freed from, and from thousand notes  
 (Not less unceasing, not less vain than these,)  
 By which the finer passages of sense  
 Are occupied; and the Soul, that would incline  
 To listen, is prevented or deterred. 80

“And may it not be hoped, that, placed by age  
 In like removal, tranquil though severe,  
 We are not so removed for utter loss;  
 But for some favour, suited to our need?  
 What more than that the severing should confer 85  
 Fresh power to commune with the invisible world,  
 And hear the mighty stream of tendency  
 Uttering, for elevation of our thought,  
 A clear sonorous voice, inaudible  
 To the vast multitude; whose doom it is 90  
 To run the giddy round of vain delight,  
 Or fret and labour on the Plain below.

“But, if to such sublime ascent the hopes  
 Of Man may rise, as to a welcome close  
 And termination of his mortal course; 95  
 Them only can such hope inspire whose minds  
 Have not been starved by absolute neglect;  
 Nor bodies crushed by unremitting toil;  
 To whom kind Nature, therefore, may afford  
 Proof of the sacred love she bears for all; 100  
 Whose birthright Reason, therefore, may ensure.  
 For me, consulting what I feel within  
 In times when most existence with herself  
 Is satisfied, I cannot but believe,  
 That, far as kindly Nature hath free scope 105  
 And Reason’s sway predominates; even so far,  
 Country, society, and time itself,

75 visits 1827: touches MS., 1814-20 85 so 1827: What more

than this, that we thereby should gain MS., 1814-20

88-90 Uttering in clear sonorous voice, unknown

Unto the multitude etc. MS.

94 welcome close] natural bourne MS.

96 They only such ascent

can reach whose minds MS.

102-6 For me, I cannot but believe that far,

That far as these predominate even so far MS.

That saps the individual's bodily frame,  
 And lays the generations low in dust,  
 Do, by the almighty Ruler's grace, partake 110  
 Of one maternal spirit, bringing forth  
 And cherishing with ever-constant love,  
 That tires not, nor betrays. Our life is turned  
 Out of her course, wherever man is made  
 An offering, or a sacrifice, a tool 115  
 Or implement, a passive thing employed  
 As a brute mean, without acknowledgment  
 Of common right or interest in the end ;  
 Used or abused, as selfishness may prompt.  
 Say, what can follow for a rational soul 120  
 Perverted thus, but weakness in all good,  
 And strength in evil ? Hence an after-call  
 For chastisement, and custody, and bonds,  
 And oft-times Death, avenger of the past,  
 And the sole guardian in whose hands we dare 125  
 Entrust the future.—Not for these sad issues  
 Was Man created ; but to obey the law  
 Of life, and hope, and action. And 'tis known  
 That when we stand upon our native soil,  
 Unelbowed by such objects as oppress 130  
 Our active powers, those powers themselves become  
 Strong to subvert our noxious qualities :

110-11 Have one maternal *etc.* MS. 112 ever-constant] never  
 wearied MS. 113 tires] faints MS.

126-9 . . . But the genuine law

'Tis one that prompts and urges and impels,	} Is that which is an impulse, yea, a soul
A law of life and action—for 'tis known	
That when <i>etc.</i>	

Akin to our own nature, for we  
know MSS.

130 oppress] constrain MS. 184: distort MS.

132-40 Subversive of our noxious qualities,  
 And by the substitution of delight,  
 And by new influxes of strength suppress  
 All evil, then the Being spreads abroad  
 His branches to the wind, and all who see  
 Bless him rejoicing in his neighbourhood.  
 There is one only liberty, 'tis his  
 Who by beneficence is circumscribed,  
 'Tis his to whom the power of doing good  
 Is law and statute, penalty and bond,  
 His prison and his warder, his who finds  
 His freedom in the joy of virtuous thoughts:  
 Then sorrow to the many they in whom MS.

They sweep distemper from the busy day,  
 And make the chalice of the big round year  
 Run o'er with gladness; whence the Being moves 135  
 In beauty through the world; and all who see  
 Bless him, rejoicing in his neighbourhood."

"Then," said the Solitary, "by what force  
 Of language shall a feeling heart express  
 Her sorrow for that multitude in whom 140  
 We look for health from seeds that have been sown  
 In sickness, and for increase in a power  
 That works but by extinction? On themselves  
 They cannot lean, nor turn to their own hearts  
 To know what they must do; their wisdom is 145  
 To look into the eyes of others, thence  
 To be instructed what they must avoid:  
 Or rather, let us say, how least observed,  
 How with most quiet and most silent death,  
 With the least taint and injury to the air 150  
 The oppressor breathes, their human form divine,  
 And their immortal soul, may waste away."

The Sage rejoined, "I thank you—you have spared  
 My voice the utterance of a keen regret,  
 A wide compassion which with you I share. 155  
 When, heretofore, I placed before your sight  
 A Little-one, subjected to the arts  
 Of modern ingenuity, and made  
 The senseless member of a vast machine,  
 Serving as doth a spindle or a wheel; 160  
 Think not, that, pitying him, I could forget  
 The rustic Boy, who walks the fields, untaught;  
 The slave of ignorance, and oft of want,  
 And miserable hunger. Much, too much,  
 Of this unhappy lot, in early youth 165

133-5 *so* 1827-50 (*but* Vessel *for* chalice 1827):

They sweep away infection from the heart;  
 And, by the substitution of delight,  
 Suppress all evil 1814-20

138 force 1827: power 1814-20 146/7 It is their virtue and their  
 discipline MS. 18<sup>a</sup> 151 oppressor] rich man MS. 18<sup>a</sup>  
 152 immortal] eternal MS. 18<sup>a</sup> MS. v. notes 156/7 A most familiar  
 object of our days, MS., 1814-20

We both have witnessed, lot which I myself  
 Shared, though in mild and merciful degree:  
 Yet was the mind to hinderances exposed,  
 Through which I struggled, not without distress  
 And sometimes injury, like a lamb enthralled 170  
 'Mid thorns and brambles; or a bird that breaks  
 Through a strong net, and mounts upon the wind,  
 Though with her plumes impaired. If they, whose souls  
 Should open while they range the richer fields  
 Of merry England, are obstructed less 175  
 By indigence, their ignorance is not less,  
 Nor less to be deplored. For who can doubt  
 That tens of thousands at this day exist  
 Such as the boy you painted, lineal heirs  
 Of those who once were vassals of her soil, 180  
 Following its fortunes like the beasts or trees  
 Which it sustained. But no one takes delight  
 In this oppression; none are proud of it;  
 It bears no sounding name, nor ever bore;  
 A standing grievance, an indigenous vice 185  
 Of every country under heaven. My thoughts  
 Were turned to evils that are new and chosen,  
 A bondage lurking under shape of good,—  
 Arts, in themselves beneficent and kind,  
 But all too fondly followed and too far;— 190  
 To victims, which the merciful can see  
 Nor think that they are victims—turned to wrongs,  
 By women, who have children of their own,  
 Beheld without compassion, yea, with praise!  
 I spake of mischief by the wise diffused 195  
 With gladness, thinking that the more it spreads  
 The healthier, the securer, we become;  
 Delusion which a moment may destroy!  
 Lastly I mourned for those whom I had seen  
 Corrupted and cast down, on favoured ground, 200  
 Where circumstance and nature had combined  
 To shelter innocence, and cherish love;

168 the mind 1827: my mind 1814-20: my youth MS. 170 lamb  
 1827: Sheep MS., 1814-20

186-7 Of every age and country under heaven,  
 I spoke of cherished evils new and chosen, MS.

193-4 By . . . Beheld 1827: Which . . . Regard MS., 1814-20

Who, but for this intrusion, would have lived,  
 Possessed of health, and strength, and peace of mind ;  
 Thus would have lived, or never have been born. 205

“Alas! what differs more than man from man!  
 And whence that difference? Whence but from himself?  
 For see the universal Race endowed  
 With the same upright form!—The sun is fixed,  
 And the infinite magnificence of heaven 210  
 Fixed, within reach of every human eye;  
 The sleepless ocean murmurs for all ears;  
 The vernal field infuses fresh delight  
 Into all hearts. Throughout the world of sense,  
 Even as an object is sublime or fair, 215  
 That object is laid open to the view  
 Without reserve or veil; and as a power  
 Is salutary, or an influence sweet,  
 Are each and all enabled to perceive  
 That power, that influence, by impartial law. 220  
 Gifts nobler are vouchsafed alike to all;  
 Reason, and, with that reason, smiles and tears;  
 Imagination, freedom in the will;  
 Conscience to guide and check; and death to be  
 Foretasted, immortality conceived 225  
 By all,—a blissful immortality,  
 To them whose holiness on earth shall make  
 The Spirit capable of heaven, assured.  
 Strange, then, nor less than monstrous, might be deemed  
 The failure, if the Almighty, to this point 230  
 Liberal and undistinguishing, should hide  
 The excellence of moral qualities  
 From common understanding; leaving truth  
 And virtue, difficult, abstruse, and dark;  
 Hard to be won, and only by a few; 235  
 Strange, should He deal herein with nice respects,  
 And frustrate all the rest! Believe it not:  
 The primal duties shine aloft—like stars;  
 The charities that soothe, and heal, and bless,

204/5 And all their old hereditary rights MS. 211 so 1827: Within  
 the reach MS., 1814–20 225 conceived 1845: presumed MS.,  
 1814–43 226–8 added 1845 231 Liberal] Bountiful C 233  
 understanding] observation MS.

Are scattered at the feet of Man—like flowers. 240  
 The generous inclination, the just rule,  
 Kind wishes, and good actions, and pure thoughts—  
 No mystery is here! Here is no boon  
 For high—yet not for low; for proudly graced—  
 Yet not for meek of heart. The smoke ascends 245  
 To heaven as lightly from the cottage-hearth  
 As from the haughtiest palace. He, whose soul  
 Ponders this true equality, may walk  
 The fields of earth with gratitude and hope;  
 Yet, in that meditation, will he find 250  
 Motive to sadder grief, as we have found;  
 Lamenting ancient virtues overthrown,  
 And for the injustice grieving, that hath made  
 So wide a difference between man and man.

“Then let us rather fix our gladdened thoughts 255  
 Upon the brighter scene. How blest that pair  
 Of blooming Boys (whom we beheld even now)  
 Blest in their several and their common lot!  
 A few short hours of each returning day  
 The thriving prisoners of their village-school: 260  
 And thence let loose, to seek their pleasant homes  
 Or range the grassy lawn in vacancy;  
 To breathe and to be happy, run and shout  
 Idle,—but no delay, no harm, no loss;  
 For every genial power of heaven and earth, 265  
 Through all the seasons of the changeful year,  
 Obsequiously doth take upon herself  
 To labour for them; bringing each in turn  
 The tribute of enjoyment, knowledge, health,  
 Beauty, or strength! Such privilege is theirs, 270  
 Granted alike in the outset of their course  
 To both; and, if that partnership must cease,  
 I grieve not,” to the Pastor here he turned,  
 “Much as I glory in that child of yours,

243 here! Here is no 1837: here; no special MS., 1814–32 244–5  
 yet . . . Yet 1837: and . . . And MS., 1814–32 247 haughtiest  
 1837: proudest *corr. to* haughty MS.: haughty 1814–32 253 And  
 sorrowing for the injustice MS. 254 between 1837: betwixt MS.,  
 1814–32 255 Then 1837: But MS., 1814–27: fix MS., 1814–20,  
 1837: turn: 1827–32: gladdened] happy MS. 261 pleasant] cheerful  
 MS. 272 and if hereafter they must part MS.

Repine not for his cottage-comrade, whom 275  
 Belike no higher destiny awaits  
 Than the old hereditary wish fulfilled;  
 The wish for liberty to live—content  
 With what Heaven grants, and die—in peace of mind,  
 Within the bosom of his native vale. 280  
 At least, whatever fate the noon of life  
 Reserves for either, sure it is that both  
 Have been permitted to enjoy the dawn;  
 Whether regarded as a jocund time,  
 That in itself may terminate, or lead 285  
 In course of nature to a sober eve.  
 Both have been fairly dealt with; looking back  
 They will allow that justice has in them  
 Been shown, alike to body and to mind.”

He paused, as if revolving in his soul 290  
 Some weighty matter; then, with fervent voice  
 And an impassioned majesty, exclaimed—

“O for the coming of that glorious time  
 When, prizing knowledge as her noblest wealth  
 And best protection, this imperial Realm, 295  
 While she exacts allegiance, shall admit  
 An obligation, on her part, to *teach*  
 Them who are born to serve her and obey;  
 Binding herself by statute to secure  
 For all the children whom her soil maintains 300  
 The rudiments of letters, and inform  
 The mind with moral and religious truth,  
 Both understood and practised,—so that none,

275–80 . . . the fair-faced peasant boy,

His lowly Comrade, destined here, perchance, (perhaps.)

To live and die in calm obscurity (humble innocence) MS.

282 sure it is 1837: this is sure MS., 1814–32 284 jocund] care-  
 less MS.

293–6 O for that happy period, ages past

Not unforeseen nor unprepared, though Heaven,  
 A saintly (Royal) Youth removing from his throne  
 Before his cherished purpose was fulfilled,

Did to this Land's unworthiness refuse

The pretious boon—to think the time were come (that era I invoke)

Too long deferred, when this enlightened Realm,

On knowledge resting as her surest prop,

While she *etc.* MSS.

- However destitute, be left to droop  
 By timely culture unsustained ; or run 305  
 Into a wild disorder ; or be forced  
 To drudge through a weary life without the help  
 Of intellectual implements and tools ;  
 A savage horde among the civilised,  
 A servile band among the lordly free! 310  
 This sacred right, the lisping babe proclaims  
 To be inherent in him, by Heaven's will,  
 For the protection of his innocence ;  
 And the rude boy—who, having overpast  
 The sinless age, by conscience is enrolled, 315  
 Yet mutinously knits his angry brow,  
 And lifts his wilful hand on mischief bent,  
 Or turns the godlike faculty of speech  
 To impious use—by process indirect  
 Declares his due, while he makes known his need. 320  
 —This sacred right is fruitlessly announced,  
 This universal plea in vain addressed,  
 To eyes and ears of parents who themselves  
 Did, in the time of their necessity,  
 Urge it in vain ; and, therefore, like a prayer 325  
 That from the humblest floor ascends to heaven,  
 It mounts to reach the State's parental ear ;
- 300-7 To all, at least place within reach of all  
 The Rudiments of learning, so that none  
 As they grow up, however desolate,  
 (However needy, poor or destitute)  
 Shall be compelled to drudge without the aid MSS.
- 307 a weary . . . help 1837: weary . . . aid 1814-32
- 311 so 1827: This right, as sacred almost as the right  
 To exist and be supplied with sustenance  
 And means of life, the lisping Babe proclaims MSS., 1814-20
- 312-16 To be invested (inherent) in his innocence ;  
 And the rude Lad (Boy) who knits his sullen (angry) brow MSS.
- 317 wilful] untaught (unchecked) MS. 318 godlike 1827: sacred  
 MS., 1814-20
- 321-2 In vain the right of Nature is announced  
 The discipline of slavery is unknown  
 To England, hence the more doth she require  
 The discipline of Virtue, how can else  
 Order exist, security or peace ? (v. ll. 351-4)  
 The plea is universal—the demand  
 A just demand of human nature, yet  
 It is, and must be, fruitlessly addressed MS.

Who, if indeed she own a mother's heart,  
 And be not most unfeelingly devoid  
 Of gratitude to Providence, will grant 330  
 The unquestionable good—which, England, safe  
 From interference of external force,  
 May grant at leisure; without risk incurred  
 That what in wisdom for herself she doth,  
 Others shall e'er be able to undo. 335

"Look! and behold, from Calpe's sunburnt cliffs  
 To the flat margin of the Baltic sea,  
 Long-reverenced titles cast away as weeds;  
 Laws overturned; and territory split,  
 Like fields of ice rent by the polar wind, 340  
 And forced to join in less obnoxious shapes  
 Which, ere they gain consistence, by a gust  
 Of the same breath are shattered and destroyed.  
 Meantime the sovereignty of these fair Isles  
 Remains entire and indivisible: 345  
 And, if that ignorance were removed, which breeds  
 Within the compass of their several shores  
 Dark discontent, or loud commotion, each  
 Might still preserve the beautiful repose  
 Of heavenly bodies shining in their spheres. 350  
 —The discipline of slavery is unknown  
 Among us,—hence the more do we require  
 The discipline of virtue; order else  
 Cannot subsist, nor confidence, nor peace.  
 Thus, duties rising out of good possest 355  
 And prudent caution needful to avert  
 Impending evil, equally require  
 That the whole people should be taught and trained.  
 So shall licentiousness and black resolve  
 Be rooted out, and virtuous habits take 360

320-31 Must grant what England consciously secure MS. 342  
 Which 1845, MS., 1814-32: That 1837-43 346 breeds 1827:  
 acts MS., 1814-20

348-9 so 1827: To breed commotion and disquietude,  
 Each might preserve *etc.* MS., 1814-20

357 equally] obviously MS.

357-8 so 1827: . . . do alike require  
 That permanent provision should be made  
 For the whole people to be *etc.* MS., 1814-20

Their place ; and genuine piety descend,  
Like an inheritance, from age to age.

“With such foundations laid, avaunt the fear  
Of numbers crowded on their native soil,  
To the prevention of all healthful growth 365  
Through mutual injury! Rather in the law  
Of increase and the mandate from above  
Rejoice!—and ye have special cause for joy.  
—For, as the element of air affords  
An easy passage to the industrious bees 370  
Fraught with their burthens ; and a way as smooth  
For those ordained to take their sounding flight  
From the thronged hive, and settle where they list  
In fresh abodes—their labour to renew ;  
So the wide waters, open to the power, 375  
The will, the instincts, and appointed needs  
Of Britain, do invite her to cast off  
Her swarms, and in succession send them forth ;  
Bound to establish new communities  
On every shore whose aspect favours hope 380  
Or bold adventure ; promising to skill  
And perseverance their deserved reward.

“Yes,” he continued, kindling as he spake,  
“Change wide, and deep, and silently performed,  
This Land shall witness ; and as days roll on, 385  
Earth’s universal frame shall feel the effect ;  
Even till the smallest habitable rock,  
Beaten by lonely billows, hear the songs  
Of humanised society ; and bloom  
With civil arts, that shall breathe forth their fragrance, 390  
A grateful tribute to all-ruling Heaven.  
From culture, unexclusively bestowed

361/2 Upon the humblest member (subject) of the State, C  
386/7 Through her broad Continents and scattered Isles MS. 388  
That Ocean beats (lulls) with solitary waves MS. 389–91 *not in MS.*  
390 *so* 1845: With civil arts, and (that 1827–43) send their fragrance forth  
1814–43  
392–3 *so* 1827:

From Culture, universally bestowed  
On Britain’s (Upon a MS.) noble Race in freedom born ;  
From (True MS.) Education, from that humble source MS., 1814–20

On Albion's noble Race in freedom born,  
 Expect these mighty issues: from the pains  
 And faithful care of unambitious schools 395  
 Instructing simple childhood's ready ear:  
 Thence look for these magnificent results!  
 —Vast the circumference of hope—and ye  
 Are at its centre, British Lawgivers;  
 Ah! sleep not there in shame! Shall Wisdom's voice 400  
 From out the bosom of these troubled times  
 Repeat the dictates of her calmer mind,  
 And shall the venerable halls ye fill  
 Refuse to echo the sublime decree?  
 Trust not to partial care a general good; 405  
 Transfer not to futurity a work  
 Of urgent need.—Your Country must complete  
 Her glorious destiny. Begin even now,  
 Now, when oppression, like the Egyptian plague  
 Of darkness, stretched o'er guilty Europe, makes 410  
 The brightness more conspicuous that invests  
 The happy Island where ye think and act;  
 Now, when destruction is a prime pursuit,  
 Show to the wretched nations for what end  
 The powers of civil polity were given." 415

Abruptly here, but with a graceful air,  
 The Sage broke off. No sooner had he ceased

395 faithful 1827: quiet MS., 1814-20

398-407 So from the virtues of a petty seed,  
 Which in his thievish bill the flying Crow  
 Transports without encumbrance, are evolved  
 Trunk, limbs, and umbrage of the giant oak  
 Darkening the noontide, so from some still fount,  
 Which the exulting Traveller bestrides  
 With sportive ease and proud complacency,  
 Proceeds the state of Ganges, or the Nile.  
 Awake, ye Rulers of these favoured Realms,  
 Awake! assist your Country to fulfill MS.

411-12 . . . conspicuous appear

In which we move about and think and act MS.

413/14 And with the anxieties of beastly war  
 Your minds are through necessity oppressed MS.

416-17 At once descending from the height of zeal  
 Here gracefully the impassioned Sage broke off  
 By apprehension checked lest his discourse  
 Might tire the Listener's patience and exhaust  
 His sympathy. No sooner *etc.* MS.

Than, looking forth, the gentle Lady said,  
 "Behold the shades of afternoon have fallen  
 Upon this flowery slope; and see—beyond— 420  
 The silvery lake is streaked with placid blue;  
 As if preparing for the peace of evening.  
 How temptingly the landscape shines! The air  
 Breathes invitation; easy is the walk  
 To the lake's margin, where a boat lies moored 425  
 Under a sheltering tree."—Upon this hint  
 We rose together: all were pleased; but most  
 The beauteous girl, whose cheek was flushed with joy.  
 Light as a sunbeam glides along the hills  
 She vanished—eager to impart the scheme 430  
 To her loved brother and his shy compeer.  
 —Now was there bustle in the Vicar's house  
 And earnest preparation.—Forth we went,  
 And down the vale along the streamlet's edge  
 Pursued our way, a broken company, 435  
 Mute or conversing, single or in pairs.  
 Thus having reached a bridge, that overarched  
 The hasty rivulet where it lay becalmed  
 In a deep pool, by happy chance we saw  
 A twofold image; on a grassy bank 440  
 A snow-white ram, and in the crystal flood  
 Another and the same! Most beautiful,  
 On the green turf, with his imperial front  
 Shaggy and bold, and wreathèd horns superb,  
 The breathing creature stood; as beautiful, 445  
 Beneath him, showed his shadowy counterpart.  
 Each had his glowing mountains, each his sky,  
 And each seemed centre of his own fair world:  
 Antipodes unconscious of each other,  
 Yet, in partition, with their several spheres, 450  
 Blended in perfect stillness, to our sight!

"Ah! what a pity were it to disperse,  
 Or to disturb, so fair a spectacle,

421 so 1837: The lake, though bright, is of a placid blue; MS., 1814-32:  
 The silvery lake streaked with a placid hue C 423/4 Whose fervent  
 heat already is allayed MS. 426 Under a 1845: Beneath its MS.:  
 Beneath her 1814-43 434 so 1827: And down the Valley on the  
 Streamlet's bank MS., 1814-20 437-48 v. notes 439 By a flat  
 meadow, at a glance I saw MS. 441 crystal] peaceful MS.

And yet a breath can do it!"

These few words

The Lady whispered, while we stood and gazed 455

Gathered together, all in still delight,

Not without awe. Thence passing on, she said

In like low voice to my particular ear,

"I love to hear that eloquent old Man

Pour forth his meditations, and descant 460

On human life from infancy to age.

How pure his spirit! in what vivid hues

His mind gives back the various forms of things,

Caught in their fairest, happiest, attitude!

While he is speaking, I have power to see 465

Even as he sees; but when his voice hath ceased,

Then, with a sigh, sometimes I feel, as now,

That combinations so serene and bright

Cannot be lasting in a world like ours,

Whose highest beauty, beautiful as it is, 470

Like that reflected in yon quiet pool,

Seems but a fleeting sunbeam's gift, whose peace

The sufferance only of a breath of air!"

More had she said—but sportive shouts were heard

Sent from the jocund hearts of those two Boys, 475

461/2 Far back as he remembers, and as far

As he looks forward cheered by pensive hope

And wide in compass as a tender heart

Hath by experience taught him to observe

Or strong Imagination to conceive. MS.

462 How bright the picture, in what vivid (living) hues

Doth he reflect the character of things

{ Even like that image in the silent pool }

{ A mirror faithful as that silent pool } MS.

467 so 1832: I sometimes feel 1814-27

468 so divinely fair MS.

469-73 so 1845:

Cannot be lasting in a world like ours

To great and small disturbances exposed;

But him they shake not—hardly seem to touch. MS.: 1814-32 have the  
first two of these lines, preceded by Like those reflected (etc. 471):

Like those reflected in yon silent pool

Cannot be lasting in a world whose pleasure

(And whose best beauty, beautiful as it is)

Seems etc. as text, 1837: 1840-3 as text but l. 470 One whose  
best beauty etc.

475 jocund] merry MS.

Who, bearing each a basket on his arm,  
 Down the green field came tripping after us.  
 With caution we embarked; and now the pair  
 For prouder service were address; but each,  
 Wishful to leave an opening for my choice, 480  
 Dropped the light oar his eager hand had seized.  
 Thanks given for that becoming courtesy,  
 Their place I took—and for a grateful office  
 Pregnant with recollections of the time  
 When, on thy bosom, spacious Windermere! 485  
 A Youth, I practised this delightful art;  
 Tossed on the waves alone, or 'mid a crew  
 Of joyous comrades. Soon as the reedy marge  
 Was cleared, I dipped, with arms accordant, oars  
 Free from obstruction; and the boat advanced 490  
 Through crystal water, smoothly as a hawk,  
 That, disentangled from the shady boughs  
 Of some thick wood, her place of covert, cleaves  
 With correspondent wings the abyss of air.  
 —“Observe,” the Vicar said, “yon rocky isle 495  
 With birch-trees fringed; my hand shall guide the helm,  
 While thitherward we shape our course; or while

478-83 *so* 1837: Our company embarked, and orders given  
 And requisite authority put forth,  
 Those inexperienced voyagers were hushed  
 Into secure composure. Looks and words  
 Expressed the wishes of that youthful pair,  
 But an inexorable law forbade,  
 And each resigned the oar which he had seized.  
 Whereat with willing hand I undertook  
 The oarsman's labour, pleasant task to me MS.  
 When we had cautiously embarked, the Pair  
 Now for a prouder service were address;  
 But an inexorable *etc. as MS. but needful for oarsman's and*  
*grateful for pleasant* 1814-32

487-8 . . . mid a band  
 Of happy Comrades. “Towards yon rocky Isle  
 Clothed with transparent birch-trees bend your course”  
 The Vicar said, and pointed as he spoke,  
 “Or tow'rds that other on the western shore. MS., *draft* i, (488-94  
 (Soon . . . air) *added later*)

488-9 *so* 1837: Now, the reedy marge  
 Cleared, with a strenuous arm I dipped the oar 1814-32  
 490 Free from] Without MS. 491 crystal] the clear MS. 497  
 shape 1837: bend 1814-32

We seek that other, on the western shore ;  
 Where the bare columns of those lofty firs,  
 Supporting gracefully a massy dome 500  
 Of sombre foliage, seem to imitate  
 A Grecian temple rising from the Deep."

"Turn where we may," said I, "we cannot err  
 In this delicious region."—Cultured slopes,  
 Wild tracts of forest-ground, and scattered groves, 505  
 And mountains bare, or clothed with ancient woods,  
 Surrounded us ; and, as we held our way  
 Along the level of the glassy flood,  
 They ceased not to surround us ; change of place,  
 From kindred features diversely combined, 510  
 Producing change of beauty ever new.  
 —Ah ! that such beauty, varying in the light  
 Of living nature, cannot be portrayed  
 By words, nor by the pencil's silent skill ;  
 But is the property of him alone 515  
 Who hath beheld it, noted it with care,  
 And in his mind recorded it with love !  
 Suffice it, therefore, if the rural Muse  
 Vouchsafe sweet influence, while her Poet speaks  
 Of trivial occupations well devised, 520  
 And unsought pleasures springing up by chance ;  
 As if some friendly Genius had ordained  
 That, as the day thus far had been enriched  
 By acquisition of sincere delight,  
 The same should be continued to its close. 525

One spirit animating old and young,  
 A gipsy-fire we kindled on the shore

501 sombre] darksome C 505 Rich fields and sylvan slopes, and  
 rugged rocks MS. 508 surface of the crystal MS. 510  
 diversely] variously MS.

513 Of living Nature and presented thus

In smooth succession cannot *etc.* MS.

518-19 Yet if of willing auditors secure,

Much could the Poet tell of objects seen

With admiration fervent and sincere *corr. to*

Suppressing, therefore, all desire to aim

At that which is not in his power to reach

It shall suffice the Poet if he speak MS.

523-4 replete With pure enjoyment and serene delight MS.

Of the fair Isle with birch-trees fringed—and there,  
 Merrily seated in a ring, partook  
 A choice repast—served by our young companions 530  
 With rival earnestness and kindred glee.  
 Launched from our hands the smooth stones skimmed the lake;  
 With shouts we raised the echoes;—stiller sounds  
 The lovely Girl supplied—a simple song,  
 Whose low tones reached not to the distant rocks 535  
 To be repeated thence, but gently sank  
 Into our hearts; and charmed the peaceful flood.  
 Rapaciously we gathered flowery spoils  
 From land and water; lilies of each hue—  
 Golden and white, that float upon the waves, 540  
 And court the wind; and leaves of that shy plant,  
 (Her flowers were shed) the lily of the vale,  
 That loves the ground, and from the sun withholds  
 Her pensive beauty; from the breeze her sweets.

Such product, and such pastime, did the place 545  
 And season yield; but, as we re-embarked,  
 Leaving, in quest of other scenes, the shore  
 Of that wild spot, the Solitary said  
 In a low voice, yet careless who might hear,  
 “The fire, that burned so brightly to our wish, 550  
 Where is it now?—Deserted on the beach—  
 Dying, or dead! Nor shall the fanning breeze  
 Revive its ashes. What care we for this,  
 Whose ends are gained? Behold an emblem here  
 Of one day’s pleasure, and all mortal joys! 555  
 And, in this unpremeditated slight  
 Of that which is no longer needed, see  
 The common course of human gratitude!”

528 Of that fair Island, and beneath its trees MS. 530 by youthful  
 Pages served C 530-1 so 1837: The beverage drawn from China’s  
 fragrant herb MS., 1814-32 533 raised 1837: roused MS., 1814-32  
 536 thence 1827: there MS., 1814-20 541-2 leaves . . . shed *not*  
*in* MS. 544/5 Shyest of plants (flowers) yet social to (with) her kind  
 MS. 552 Dying or dead 1837: It seems extinct MS., 1814-32  
 554 Whose needs are served MS.  
 556-8 Of that whereof we have no human need  
 An emblem too of human gratitude  
 That kindles promptly and as soon expires MS.

This plaintive note disturbed not the repose  
 Of the still evening. Right across the lake 560  
 Our pinnacle moves; then, coasting creek and bay,  
 Glades we behold, and into thickets peep,  
 Where couch the spotted deer; or raised our eyes  
 To shaggy steeps on which the careless goat  
 Browsed by the side of dashing waterfalls; 565  
 And thus the bark, meandering with the shore,  
 Pursued her voyage, till a natural pier  
 Of jutting rock invited us to land.

Alert to follow as the Pastor led,  
 We clomb a green hill's side; and, as we clomb, 570  
 The Valley, opening out her bosom, gave  
 Fair prospect, intercepted less and less,  
 O'er the flat meadows and indented coast  
 Of the smooth lake, in compass seen:—far off,  
 And yet conspicuous, stood the old Church-tower, 575  
 In majesty presiding over fields  
 And habitations seemingly preserved  
 From all intrusion of the restless world  
 By rocks impassable and mountains huge.

Soft heath this elevated spot supplied, 580  
 And choice of moss-clad stones, whereon we couched

560-74 . . . evening. Southward now we steered  
 And by assistance of a jutting rock  
 That framed a natural pier we landed all  
 On the main shore, and climbing the steep side  
 Of a green hill that from the water's edge  
 Rose with a bold ascent we there attained  
 Slowly, a less and less obstructed sight  
 Of the whole lake *etc.* MS.

566-7 *so* 1837: Thus did . . . Pursue 1814-32

567-8 *so* 1827: . . . till a point was gained

Where a projecting line of rock, that framed

A natural pier, invited us to land. 1814-20

570-4 *so* 1827: side; and thence obtained slowly *etc. as* MS., 1814-20 573

O'er 1837: Of MS., 1814-32 574 smooth 1827: whole 1814-20

576-7 *so* 1827: o'er the Vale And all her dwellings MS., 1814-20 578

all . . . the 1845: the . . . a MS., 1814-43

580-4 Upon this elevated spot we stood

Lingering well pleased, admiring quietly

And each not seldom eager to point out MS.

581-4 *so* 1827: With resting-place of mossy stone;—and there

We sate reclined—admiring quietly

Or sate reclined ; admiring quietly  
 The general aspect of the scene ; but each  
 Not seldom over anxious to make known  
 His own discoveries ; or to favourite points 585  
 Directing notice, merely from a wish  
 To impart a joy, imperfect while unshared.  
 That rapturous moment never shall I forget  
 When these particular interests were effaced  
 From every mind !—Already had the sun, 590  
 Sinking with less than ordinary state,  
 Attained his western bound ; but rays of light—  
 Now suddenly diverging from the orb  
 Retired behind the mountain-tops or veiled  
 By the dense air—shot upwards to the crown 595  
 Of the blue firmament—aloft, and wide :  
 And multitudes of little floating clouds,  
 Through their ethereal texture pierced—ere we,  
 Who saw, of change were conscious—had become  
 Vivid as fire ; clouds separately poised,— 600  
 Innumerable multitude of forms  
 Scattered through half the circle of the sky ;  
 And giving back, and shedding each on each,  
 With prodigal communion, the bright hues  
 Which from the unapparent fount of glory 605  
 They had imbibed, and ceased not to receive.  
 That which the heavens displayed, the liquid deep  
 Repeated ; but with unity sublime !

The frame and general aspect of the scene ;

And each not seldom eager to make known 1814–20

588 *so* 1837: ne'er 1814–32

588–90 Until these acts of mutual regard

And little separate notices were lost

In one impression that possessed the soul

Of all who saw. Already *etc.* MS.

Until these signs of mutual regard

And small particular interests were effaced

By one impression that possessed the soul

Of all who saw. MS. *alt.*

594–5 Behind the summit of the [? western] hill

Withdrawn or veiled, shot *etc.* MS.

598 *so* 1837: Pierced through their thin ethereal mould, ere we, MS.,  
 1814–20: Ere we, who saw, of change were conscious, pierced 1827–32

599 *so* MS., 1814–20, 1837: Through their ethereal texture, had become  
 1827–32

While from the grassy mountain's open side  
 We gazed, in silence hushed, with eyes intent 610  
 On the refulgent spectacle, diffused  
 Through earth, sky, water, and all visible space,  
 The Priest in holy transport thus exclaimed :

"Eternal Spirit! universal God!  
 Power inaccessible to human thought, 615  
 Save by degrees and steps which thou hast deigned  
 To furnish ; for this effluence of thyself,  
 To the infirmity of mortal sense  
 Vouchsafed ; this local transitory type  
 Of thy paternal splendours, and the pomp 620  
 Of those who fill thy courts in highest heaven,  
 The radiant Cherubim ;—accept the thanks  
 Which we, thy humble Creatures, here convened,  
 Presume to offer ; we, who—from the breast  
 Of the frail earth, permitted to behold 625  
 The faint reflections only of thy face—  
 Are yet exalted, and in soul adore!  
 Such as they are who in thy presence stand  
 Unsullied, incorruptible, and drink  
 Imperishable majesty streamed forth 630  
 From thy empyreal throne, the elect of earth  
 Shall be—divested at the appointed hour  
 Of all dishonour, cleansed from mortal stain.  
 —Accomplish, then, their number ; and conclude  
 Time's weary course! Or if, by thy decree, 635  
 The consummation that will come by stealth  
 Be yet far distant, let thy Word prevail,  
 Oh! let thy Word prevail, to take away  
 The sting of human nature. Spread the law,  
 As it is written in thy holy book, 640  
 Throughout all lands: let every nation hear  
 The high behest, and every heart obey ;  
 Both for the love of purity, and hope

615 Through every region of the spacious earth  
 And through all worlds where'er the light of life  
 Is kindled, and intelligence abides  
 Adored and dreaded. Being infinite  
 And inaccessible *etc.* MS.

617 effluence] 1827: Image 1814–20 617–18 For this material  
 image of thyself MS. 623 Which we] Of us MS., *omitting* 624–7

Which it affords, to such as do thy will  
 And persevere in good, that they shall rise, 645  
 To have a nearer view of thee, in heaven.  
 —Father of good! this prayer in bounty grant,  
 In mercy grant it, to thy wretched sons.  
 Then, nor till then, shall persecution cease,  
 And cruel wars expire. The way is marked, 650  
 The guide appointed, and the ransom paid.  
 Alas! the nations, who of yore received  
 These tidings, and in Christian temples meet  
 The sacred truth to acknowledge, linger still;  
 Preferring bonds and darkness to a state 655  
 Of holy freedom, by redeeming love  
 Proffered to all, while yet on earth detained.

“So fare the many; and the thoughtful few,  
 Who in the anguish of their souls bewail  
 This dire perverseness, cannot choose but ask, 660  
 Shall it endure?—Shall enmity and strife,  
 Falsehood and guile, be left to sow their seed;  
 And the kind never perish? Is the hope  
 Fallacious, or shall righteousness obtain  
 A peaceable dominion, wide as earth, 665  
 And ne’er to fail? Shall that blest day arrive  
 When they, whose choice or lot it is to dwell  
 In crowded cities, without fear shall live  
 Studious of mutual benefit; and he,  
 Whom Morn awakens, among dews and flowers 670  
 Of every clime, to till the lonely field,  
 Be happy in himself?—The law of faith  
 Working through love, such conquest shall it gain,  
 Such triumph over sin and guilt achieve?  
 Almighty Lord, thy further grace impart! 675

652-4 But they who knew—the nations who of yore  
 Heard, and erected temples where they meet  
 Do in their souls’ perverseness linger still MS.

658-66 Shall this be so? And shall the misery  
 Deceit and guile be left to sow their seed  
 And the kind never perish? Is the hope  
 Fallacious, or will that blest day arrive  
 When righteousness shall win and hold the world  
 In peaceable dominion ne’er to fail MS.

668/9 Of public outrages and private wrong MS. 670 so 1837:  
 Whom morning wakes, among sweet dews and flowers MS., 1814-32

And with that help the wonder shall be seen  
Fulfilled, the hope accomplished; and thy praise  
Be sung with transport and unceasing joy.

“Once,” and with mild demeanour, as he spake,  
On us the venerable Pastor turned 680  
His beaming eye that had been raised to Heaven,  
“Once, while the Name, Jehovah, was a sound  
Within the circuit of this sea-girt isle  
Unheard, the savage nations bowed the head  
To Gods delighting in remorseless deeds; 685  
Gods which themselves had fashioned, to promote  
Ill purposes, and flatter foul desires.  
Then, in the bosom of yon mountain-cove,  
To those inventions of corrupted man  
Mysterious rites were solemnised; and there— 690  
Amid impending rocks and gloomy woods—  
Of those terrific Idols some received  
Such dismal service, that the loudest voice  
Of the swoln cataracts (which now are heard  
Soft murmuring) was too weak to overcome, 695  
Though aided by wild winds, the groans and shrieks  
Of human victims, offered up to appease  
Or to propitiate. And, if living eyes

- 679 mild 1827-45: wild 1850 679-81 added 1827  
681 that Heavenward had been raised C 683 Amid the forests of  
etc. MS. 684 the head 1827: their heads MS., 1814-20  
688 Then, mid these mountainous retreats (mountain fastnesses), (for here  
May yet be seen memorials of that age  
In unmolested solitude preserved) MS.  
690-1 . . . in groves  
Gloomy and still, selected from the depths  
Of deepest forests, Nature's silent holds  
And awe-inspiring fastnesses; secure  
From all intrusion, till by steel and flame  
They were laid waste—the consecrated oaks  
Felled to the ground and altars overturned MS.  
692 so 1827: dread Idols some, perchance, 1814-20 terrific] accursed MS.  
694-5 Of the perpetual streams (which now are heard  
Soft murmuring) in the season of their rage  
And highest fury were too weak to drown MS.  
698-703 Or to propitiate—and this wide-spread mere  
Oft in the quiet of a summer eve  
Reddened from shore to shore with streaming blaze (ghastly light)  
Flung from the heart of those devouring fires MS.

Had visionary faculties to see  
 The thing that hath been as the thing that is, 700  
 Aghast we might behold this crystal Mere  
 Bedimmed with smoke, in wreaths voluminous,  
 Flung from the body of devouring fires,  
 To Taranis erected on the heights  
 By priestly hands, for sacrifice performed 705  
 Exultingly, in view of open day  
 And full assemblage of a barbarous host ;  
 Or to Andates, female Power! who gave  
 (For so they fancied) glorious victory.  
 —A few rude monuments of mountain-stone 710  
 Survive ; all else is swept away.—How bright  
 The appearances of things! From such, how changed  
 The existing worship ; and with those compared,  
 The worshippers how innocent and blest!  
 So wide the difference, a willing mind 715  
 Might almost think, at this affecting hour,  
 That paradise, the lost abode of man,  
 Was raised again : and to a happy few,  
 In its original beauty, here restored.

“Whence but from thee, the true and only God, 720  
 And from the faith derived through Him who bled  
 Upon the cross, this marvellous advance  
 Of good from evil ; as if one extreme  
 Were left, the other gained.—O ye, who come  
 To kneel devoutly in yon reverend Pile, 725  
 Called to such office by the peaceful sound  
 Of sabbath bells ; and ye, who sleep in earth,  
 All cares forgotten, round its hallowed walls!  
 For you, in presence of this little band  
 Gathered together on the green hill-side, 730  
 Your Pastor is emboldened to prefer  
 Vocal thanksgivings to the eternal King ;  
 Whose love, whose counsel, whose commands, have made

701 crystal 1827: spacious 1814-20

710-14 And mark the appearances of things—how changed  
 From such the worship ; and with that compare  
 The worshipper MS.

716 so 1837: At this affecting hour, might almost think MS., 1814-32  
 727/8 Living or dead an undivided flock MS.

Your very poorest rich in peace of thought  
 And in good works ; and him, who is endowed 735  
 With scantiest knowledge, master of all truth  
 Which the salvation of his soul requires.  
 Conscious of that abundant favour showered  
 On you, the children of my humble care,  
 And this dear land, our country, while on earth 740  
 We sojourn, have I lifted up my soul,  
 Joy giving voice to fervent gratitude.  
 These barren rocks, your stern inheritance ;  
 These fertile fields, that recompense your pains ;  
 The shadowy vale, the sunny mountain-top ; 745  
 Woods waving in the wind their lofty heads,  
 Or hushed ; the roaring waters, and the still—  
 They see the offering of my lifted hands,  
 They hear my lips present their sacrifice,  
 They know if I be silent, morn or even : 750  
 For, though in whispers speaking, the full heart  
 Will find a vent ; and thought is praise to him,  
 Audible praise, to thee, omniscient Mind,  
 From whom all gifts descend, all blessings flow !”

This vesper-service closed, without delay, 755  
 From that exalted station to the plain  
 Descending, we pursued our homeward course,  
 In mute composure, o’er the shadowy lake,  
 Under a faded sky. No trace remained  
 Of those celestial splendours ; grey the vault— 760  
 Pure, cloudless, ether ; and the star of eve  
 Was wanting ; but inferior lights appeared  
 Faintly, too faint almost for sight ; and some  
 Above the darkened hills stood boldly forth  
 In twinkling lustre, ere the boat attained 765  
 Her mooring-place ; where, to the sheltering tree,  
 Our youthful Voyagers bound fast her prow,  
 With prompt yet careful hands. This done, we paced

740-2 so 1827 :

On your Abodes, and this beloved Land,  
 Our birthplace, home, and Country, while on Earth  
 We sojourn,—loudly do I utter thanks  
 With earnest joy, that will not be suppressed. MS., 1814-20

743-7 Rocks, rivers, mountains, woods, and watry Plains MS. 759  
 Under 1837: Beneath MS., 1814-32 remained] was left MS.

The dewy fields; but ere the Vicar's door  
 Was reached, the Solitary checked his steps; 770  
 Then, intermingling thanks, on each bestowed  
 A farewell salutation; and, the like  
 Receiving, took the slender path that leads  
 To the one cottage in the lonely dell:  
 But turned not without welcome promise made 775  
 That he would share the pleasures and pursuits  
 Of yet another summer's day, not loth  
 To wander with us through the fertile vales,  
 And o'er the mountain-wastes. "Another sun,"  
 Said he, "shall shine upon us, ere we part; 780  
 Another sun, and peradventure more;  
 If time, with free consent, be yours to give,  
 And season favours."

To enfeebled Power,  
 From this communion with uninjured Minds,  
 What renovation had been brought; and what 785  
 Degree of healing to a wounded spirit,  
 Dejected, and habitually disposed  
 To seek, in degradation of the Kind,  
 Excuse and solace for her own defects;  
 How far those erring notions were reformed; 790  
 And whether aught, of tendency as good  
 And pure, from further intercourse ensued;  
 This—if delightful hopes, as heretofore,  
 Inspire the serious song, and gentle Hearts  
 Cherish, and lofty Minds approve the past— 795  
 My future labours may not leave untold.

770-5 . . . the Solitary turned aside,  
 That single path inviting him that leads  
 To the one Cottage in the dell profound  
 His chosen residence. He turned aside,  
 But not till welcome promise had been given MS.

774-5 *so* 1845; and 1827-43 *but with* given *for* made

775 His chosen residence. But, ere he turned  
 Aside, a welcome promise had been given 1814-20

775-8 His chosen Residence. He turned aside  
 But not before an acceptable word  
 Of unexpected promise had been given  
 That by the morning light he would return  
 And share the random pleasures *etc.* MS.

777-8 *so* 1845: consumed In wandering with us through the Vallies fair  
 MS., 1814-43: given up To wandering with us through the fertile vales C  
 782 *be* MS., 1814-20, 1845: is 1827-43

## APPENDIX A

### THE RECLUSE. PART FIRST. BOOK FIRST.

#### HOME AT GRASMERE

ONCE to the verge of yon steep barrier came  
 A roving School-boy ; what the Adventurer's age  
 Hath now escaped his memory—but the hour,  
 One of a golden summer holiday,  
 He well remembers, though the year be gone. 5  
 Alone and devious from afar he came ;  
 And, with a sudden influx overpowered  
 At sight of this seclusion, he forgot  
 His haste, for hasty had his footsteps been  
 As boyish his pursuits ; and, sighing said, 10  
 "What happy fortune were it here to live!  
 And, if a thought of dying, if a thought  
 Of mortal separation, could intrude  
 With paradise before him, here to die!"  
 No Prophet was he, had not even a hope, 15  
 Scarcely a wish, but one bright pleasing thought,  
 A fancy in the heart of what might be  
 The lot of Others, never could be his.

The Station whence he look'd was soft and green,  
 Not giddy yet aerial, with a depth 20  
 Of Vale below, a height of hills above.  
 For rest of body, perfect was the Spot,  
 All that luxurious nature could desire,  
 But stirring to the Spirit ; who could gaze  
 And not feel motions there ? He thought of clouds 25  
 That sail on winds ; of Breezes that delight  
 To play on water, or in endless chase

1-3 Once to (on) the (grassy) brow of yon steep hill I came (stopped)  
 While I was yet a School-boy (of what age  
 I cannot well remember B, *with* I, my, *for* he, his *to* l. 45  
 4, 6 *not in* B 7 overpowered D: overcome B 10/11 As on  
 the summit of the hill I stood B *deleted* 13 intrude B *corr.*, D:  
 come in B 19 The place from which B (*corr.*)  
 21/2 Long did I halt, I could have made it even  
 My business and my errand so to halt B  
 On the cool turf I stretch'd my limbs at ease  
 And halted long B *alt. draft*  
 22 perfect was the spot B *corr.*: 'twas a perfect place B 24 stir-  
 ring B *corr.*: tempting B gaze B look D

Pursue each other through the yielding plain  
 Of grass or corn, over and through and through,  
 In billow after billow, evermore 30  
 Disporting. Nor unmindful was the Boy  
 Of sunbeams, shadows, butterflies and birds,  
 Of fluttering Sylphs, and softly-gliding Fays,  
 Genii, and winged Angels that are Lords  
 Without restraint of all which they behold. 35  
 The illusion strengthening as he gazed, he felt  
 That such unfettered liberty was his,  
 Such power and joy; but only for this end,  
 To flit from field to rock, from rock to field,  
 From shore to island, and from isle to shore, 40  
 From open ground to covert, from a bed  
 Of meadow-flowers into a tuft of wood;  
 From high to low, from low to high, yet still  
 Within the bound of this high Concave; here  
 Must be his Home, this Valley be his World. 45

Since that day forth the place to him—to me  
 (For I who live to register the truth  
 Was that same young and happy Being) became  
 As beautiful to thought, as it had been,  
 When present, to the bodily sense; a haunt 50  
 Of pure affections, shedding upon joy  
 A brighter joy; and through such damp and gloom  
 Of the gay mind, as oftentimes splenetic Youth  
 Mistakes for sorrow, darting beams of light  
 That no self-cherished sadness could withstand: 55  
 And now 'tis mine, perchance for life, dear Vale,  
 Beloved Grasmere (let the Wandering Streams

28 yielding plain D: liquid depths B 31 so D corr.: He sported.  
 Like Companionship, his fancy D deleted: not in B 33 fluttering  
 D corr.: aery BD 34 Genii and winged Angels B corr., D: Angels  
 and winged Creatures B

36-7 I sate and moved (stirr'd) in fancy (spirit), as I look'd

I seem'd to feel such liberty was mine B

41 ground D corr.: place BD 45 Must D corr.: Should BD

46-8 From that time forward was the place to me B 48 became

D corr.; stood forth D 50 the . . . sense D corr.: my . . . eyes B

51 pure D corr.: my BD

51-5 So D: Of my affections, oftentimes in joy

A brighter joy, in sorrow—but of that

I have known little—in such gloom at least

Such damp of the gay mind as stood to me

In place of sorrow, 'twas a gleam of light B

Take up, the cloud-capt hills repeat, the Name),  
One of thy lowly Dwellings is my Home.

And was the cost so great ? and could it seem 60  
An act of courage, and the thing itself  
A conquest ? who must bear the blame ? sage Man  
Thy prudence, thy experience—thy desires,  
Thy apprehensions—blush thou for them all.

Yes, the realities of life so cold, 65  
So cowardly, so ready to betray,  
So stinted in the measure of their grace  
As we pronounce them, doing them much wrong,  
Have been to me more bountiful than hope,  
Less timid than desire—but that is passed. 70

57-8 *not in B*          68 pronounce D: report B  
70-9 Less timid than desire—oh bold indeed,  
They have been, bold and bounteous unto me  
Who have myself been bold, not wanting trust  
Nor resolution, nor at last the hope  
Which is of wisdom, for I feel it is.

And did it cost so much, and did it ask (v. 60-4)  
Such length of discipline, and could it seem  
An act of courage, and the thing itself  
A conquest ? shame that this was ever so,—  
Not to the Boy or Youth, but shame to thee,  
Sage Man, thou Sun in its meridian strength.  
Thou flower in its full blow, thou King and Crown  
Of human Nature, shame to thee, sage Man,  
Thy prudence, thy experience, thy desires,  
Thy apprehensions—blush thou for them all.  
But I am safe, yes, one at least is safe,  
What once was deem'd so difficult is now  
Smooth, easy, without obstacle, what once  
Did to my blindness seem a sacrifice,  
The same is now a choice of the whole heart.  
If e'er the acceptance of such dower was deem'd  
A condescension or a weak indulgence  
To a sick fancy, it is now an act  
Of reason that exultingly aspires.  
This solitude is mine, the distant thought  
Is fetch'd out of the heaven in which it was.  
The unappropriated bliss hath found  
An owner, and that owner I am he.  
The Lord of this enjoyment is on Earth  
And in my breast. What wonder if I speak  
With fervour, am exalted with the thought  
Of my possessions, of my genuine wealth

On Nature's invitation do I come,  
 By Reason sanctioned—Can the choice mislead,  
 That made the calmest, fairest spot of earth,  
 With all its unappropriated good,  
 My own; and not mine only, for with me 75  
 Entrenched, say rather peacefully embowered,  
 Under yon Orchard, in yon humble Cot,  
 A younger Orphan of a Home extinct,  
 The only Daughter of my Parents, dwells.

Aye, think on that, my Heart, and cease to stir, 80  
 Pause upon that, and let the breathing frame  
 No longer breathe, but all be satisfied.  
 —Oh if such silence be not thanks to God  
 For what hath been bestowed, then where, where then  
 Shall gratitude find rest? Mine eyes did ne'er 85  
 Fix on a lovely object, nor my mind  
 Take pleasure in the midst of happy thoughts,  
 But either She whom now I have, who now  
 Divides with me this loved Abode, was there,  
 Or not far off. Where'er my footsteps turned, 90  
 Her Voice was like a hidden Bird that sang,  
 The thought of her was like a flash of light,  
 Or an *unseen* companionship, a breath,  
 Or fragrance independent of the wind.  
 In all my goings, in the new and old 95  
 Of all my meditations, and in this  
 Favorite of all, in this the most of all.  
 —What Being, therefore, since the birth of Man

Inward and outward, what I keep, have gain'd,  
 Shall gain, must gain, if sound be my belief  
 From past and present, rightly understood,  
 That in my day of Childhood I was less  
 The mind of Nature, less, take all in all,  
 Whatever may be lost, than I am now.  
 For proof behold this Valley, and behold  
 Yon Cottage, where with me my Emma dwells. B

71-9 Henceforth the unappropriated bliss  
 Showered on this beautiful domain hath found  
 An owner, and that owner I am he.

On Nature's *etc.* as 71-2

That made the calmest fairest purest spot

On earth the object of my daily sight

Through every change of season; my Abode

Yon Cottage where with me my Emma dwells. B 2nd draft

77 so D corr.: Under its rocky Orchard, where with me D 86 Fix  
 D corr.: Rest BD

Had ever more abundant cause to speak  
 Thanks, and if favours of the heavenly Muse 100  
 Make him more thankful, then to call on verse  
 To aid him, and in Song resound his joy.  
 The boon is absolute; surpassing grace  
 To me hath been vouchsafed; among the bowers  
 Of blissful Eden this was neither given, 105  
 Nor could be given, possession of the good  
 Which had been sighed for, ancient thought fulfilled  
 And dear Imaginations realized  
 Up to their highest measure, yea and more.

Embrace me then, ye Hills, and close me in, 110  
 Now in the clear and open day I feel  
 Your guardianship; I take it to my heart;  
 'Tis like the solemn shelter of the night.  
 But I would call thee beautiful, for mild  
 And soft, and gay, and beautiful thou art, 115  
 Dear Valley, having in thy face a smile  
 Though peaceful, full of gladness. Thou art pleased,  
 Pleased with thy crags, and woody steepes, thy Lake,  
 Its one green Island and its winding shores;  
 The multitude of little rocky hills, 120  
 Thy Church and Cottages of mountain stone  
 Clustered like stars some few, but single most,  
 And lurking dimly in their shy retreats,  
 Or glancing at each other chearful looks,  
 Like separated stars with clouds between. 125  
 What want we? have we not perpetual streams,  
 Warm woods, and sunny hills, and fresh green fields,  
 And mountains not less green, and flocks, and herds,  
 And thickets full of songsters, and the voice  
 Of lordly birds, an unexpected sound 130  
 Heard now and then from morn till latest eve,  
 Admonishing the man who walks below  
 Of solitude, and silence in the sky?  
 These have we, and a thousand nooks of earth  
 Have also these, but no where else is found, 135  
 No where (or is it fancy?) can be found  
 The one sensation that is here; 'tis here,  
 Here as it found its way into my heart  
 In childhood, here as it abides by day,  
 By night, here only; or in chosen minds 140  
 That take it with them hence, where'er they go.

'Tis, but I cannot name it, 'tis the sense  
 Of majesty, and beauty, and repose,  
 A blended holiness of earth and sky,  
 Something that makes this individual Spot, 145  
 This small Abiding-place of many Men,  
 A termination, and a last retreat,  
 A Centre, come from wheresoe'er you will,  
 A Whole without dependence or defect,  
 Made for itself; and happy in itself, 150  
 Perfect Contentment, Unity entire.

151/2 Long is it since we met, to part no more,  
 Since I and Emma heard each other's call  
 And were companions once again, like Birds  
 Which by the intruding Fowler had been scar'd,  
 Two of a scatter'd brood that could not bear  
 To live in loneliness; 'tis long since we,  
 Remembering much and hoping more, found means  
 To walk abreast tho' in a narrow path  
 With undivided steps. Our home was sweet;  
 Could it be less? if we were forc'd to change,  
 Our home again was sweet; but still, for Youth,  
 Strong as it seems and bold, is inly weak  
 And diffident, the destiny of life  
 Remain'd unfix'd, and therefore we were still so B,  
*which here has a page of about twenty-four lines missing. All but six, however,  
 are found in A, which begins thus:*

We will be free and as we mean to live  
 In culture of divinity and truth  
 Will chuse the noblest Temple that we know,—  
 Not in mistrust or ignorance of the mind,  
 And of the power she has within herself  
 To ennoble all things, made we this resolve,  
 Far less from any momentary fit  
 Of inconsiderate fancy, light and vain,  
 But that we deemed it wise to take the help  
 Which lay within our reach; and here we knew  
 Help could be found of no mean sort; the spirit  
 Of singleness, and unity, and peace.  
 In this majestic self-sufficing world,  
 This all in all of nature, it will suit,  
 We said, no other [ ] on earth so well,  
 Simplicity of purpose, love intense,  
 Ambition not aspiring to the prize  
 Of outward things, but for the prize within A  
 (Here B begins again)  
 Highest ambition; in the daily walks  
 Of business 'twill be harmony and grace  
 For the perpetual pleasure of the sense,  
 And for the Soul—I do not say too much,

Bleak season was it, turbulent and bleak,  
 When hitherward we journeyed, side by side,  
 Through bursts of sunshine and through flying showers,  
 Paced the long Vales, how long they were, and yet 155  
 How fast that length of way was left behind,  
 Wensley's rich Vale and Sedbergh's naked heights.  
 The frosty wind, as if to make amends  
 For its keen breath, was aiding to our steps,  
 And drove us onward like two ships at sea, 160  
 Or like two Birds, companions in mid air,  
 Parted and re-united by the blast.  
 Stern was the face of Nature; we rejoiced  
 In that stern countenance, for our Souls thence drew  
 A feeling of their strength. The naked Trees, 165  
 The icy brooks, as on we passed, appeared  
 To question us. "Whence come ye? to what end?"  
 They seemed to say; "What would ye," said the shower,  
 "Wild Wanderers, whither through my dark domain?"  
 The sunbeam said, "be happy." When this Vale 170

Though much be said, an image for the soul  
 A habit of Eternity and God.

- Nor have we been deceived, thus far the effect  
 Falls not below the loftiest of our hopes. AB
- 152 When Emma journeyed with me from afar  
 To this selected region (appointed covert) on we pass'd  
B, another draft
- 153 side by side D: and on foot AB 154 showers D: snow AB
- 155-7 How fast we left that length of way behind  
 Each vale far-winding and bleak naked heights  
B, another draft
- 157 rich D: long AB 159 steps D corr.: course ABD 161-2  
 not in AB 164 thence drew D: had thence AB 166 pass'd  
 B: went A
- 170-1 When this Vale . . . entered D: They were mov'd  
 All things were mov'd, they round us as we went,  
 We in the midst of them. And when the trance  
 Came to us, as we stood by Hart-leap Well,  
 The intimation of the milder day  
 Which is to be (come), the fairer world than this,  
 And rais'd us up, dejected as we were,  
 Among the records of that doleful place,  
 By sorrow for the hunted Beast who there  
 Had yielded up his breath, the awful trance  
 The vision of humanity, and of God  
 The Mourner, God the Sufferer, when the heart  
 Of his poor Creatures suffers wrongfully—  
 Both in the sadness and the joy we found  
 A promise and an earnest that we twain,

We entered, bright and solemn was the sky  
 That faced us with a passionate welcoming,  
 And led us to our threshold. Daylight failed  
 Insensibly, and round us gently fell  
 Composing darkness, with a quiet load 175  
 Of full contentment, in a little Shed  
 Disturbed, uneasy in itself as seemed,  
 And wondering at its new inhabitants.  
 It loves us now, this Vale so beautiful  
 Begins to love us! By a sullen storm, 180  
 Two months unwearied of severest storm,  
 It put the temper of our minds to proof,  
 And found us faithful through the gloom, and heard  
 The Poet mutter his prelusive songs  
 With chearful heart, an unknown voice of joy, 185  
 Among the silence of the woods and hills;  
 Silent to any gladness of sound  
 With all their Shepherds.

But the gates of Spring  
 Are opened; churlish Winter hath given leave  
 That she should entertain for this one day, 190  
 Perhaps for many genial days to come,  
 His guests, and make them jocund. They are pleased,  
 But most of all the Birds that haunt the flood,  
 With the mild summons; inmates though they be  
 Of Winter's household, they keep festival 195  
 This day, who drooped, or seemed to droop, so long;  
 They shew their pleasure, and shall I do less?  
 Happier of happy though I be, like them

A pair receding from the common world,  
 Might in that hallow'd spot to which our steps  
 Were tending, in that individual nook,  
 Might, even thus early, for ourselves secure,  
 And in the midst of these unhappy times,  
 A portion of the blessedness which love  
 And knowledge, will, we trust, hereafter give  
 To all the vales of Earth and all mankind.

Thrice hath the winter moon been filled with light  
 Since that dear day when Grasmere, our dear Vale,  
 Received us; AB

173-4 Daylight failed . . . fell D: to a home

Within a home, which was to be, and soon

Our love within a love, then darkness came AB

175 a quiet D: its quiet AB

181-2 So MS. A corr., B: It put us

to the proof, two months of storm A 190 one sweet day A

192 jocund D: happy AB

195 keep festival D corr.: are jubilant

A-D

I cannot take possession of the sky,  
 Mount with a thoughtless impulse, and wheel there, 200  
 One of a mighty multitude, whose way  
 Is a perpetual harmony, and dance  
 Magnificent. Behold, how with a grace  
 Of ceaseless motion, that might scarcely seem  
 Inferior to angelical, they prolong 205  
 Their curious pastime, shaping in mid air,  
 And sometimes with ambitious wing that soars  
 High as the level of the mountain tops,  
 A circuit ampler than the lake beneath,  
 Their own domain;—but ever, while intent 210  
 On tracing and retracing that large round,  
 Their jubilant activity evolves  
 Hundreds of curves and circlets, to and fro,  
 Upwards and downwards, progress intricate  
 Yet unperplexed, as if one spirit swayed 215  
 Their indefatigable flight. 'Tis done—  
 Ten times and more, I fancied it had ceased;  
 But lo! the vanished company again  
 Ascending, they approach—I hear their wings  
 Faint, faint at first; and then an eager sound 220  
 Passed in a moment—and as faint again!  
 They tempt the sun to sport among their plumes;  
 Tempt the smooth water, or the gleaming ice,  
 To shew them a fair image,—'tis themselves,  
 Their own fair forms, upon the glimmering plain, 225  
 Painted more soft and fair as they descend,  
 Almost to touch;—then up again aloft,  
 Up with a sally, and a flash of speed,  
 As if they scorned both resting-place and rest!  
  
 This day is a thanksgiving, 'tis a day 230  
 Of glad emotion and deep quietness;

202 *so D corr.*: And motion is a harmony A-D: *for version of 1827 v. note*

203-15 *so D corr.*: Behold them how they shape

Orb after orb, their course still round and round  
 Above the area (circuit) of the Lake, their own  
 Adopted region, girding it about  
 In wanton repetition, yet therewith  
 With that large circle evermore renew'd:  
 Hundreds of curves and circlets high and low  
 Backwards and forwards, progress intricate,  
 As if one spirit was (*corr. to dwell*) in all, and sway'd  
 A-D

219 they approach D *corr.*: list, again A-D

230-1 *so B corr.*: Spring, for this day belongs to thee, rejoice AB

Not upon me alone hath been bestowed,  
 Me rich in many onward-looking thoughts,  
 The penetrating bliss; oh surely these  
 Have felt it, not the happy Quires of Spring, 235  
 Her own peculiar family of love  
 That sport among green leaves, a blither train.

But two are missing—two, a lonely pair  
 Of milk-white Swans, wherefore are they not seen  
 Partaking this day's pleasure? From afar 240  
 They came, to sojourn here in solitude,  
 Chusing this Valley, they who had the choice  
 Of the whole world. We saw them day by day,  
 Through those two months of unrelenting storm,  
 Conspicuous at the centre of the Lake, 245  
 Their safe retreat; we knew them well, I guess  
 That the whole Valley knew them; but to us  
 They were more dear than may be well believed,  
 Not only for their beauty, and their still  
 And placid way of life, and constant love 250  
 Inseparable, not for these alone,  
 But that their state so much resembled ours,  
 They having also chosen this abode;  
 They strangers, and we strangers; they a pair,  
 And we a solitary pair like them. 255  
 They should not have departed; many days  
 Did I look forth in vain, nor on the wing  
 Could see them, nor in that small open space  
 Of blue unfrozen water, where they lodged,  
 And lived so long in quiet, side by side. 260  
 Shall we behold them, consecrated friends,  
 Faithful Companions, yet another year  
 Surviving, they for us, and we for them,

233 rich in B *corr.*: blest with AB

234-6 so B *corr.*: This sunshine and mild air—Oh surely these  
 Are grateful, not the happy Quires of love,  
 Thine own peculiar family sweet Spring, AB

237 a blither D *corr.*: so blithe a A-D

239-40 so D: . . . Ah why are these not here  
 These above all, ah, why are they not here  
 To share in AB

241 so D *corr.*: They came like Emma and myself to live  
 Together here in peace and solitude A-D

250 constant D *corr.*: faithful A-D 257-8 so D *corr.*: I've looked  
 for them . . . Have seen A-D

261-2 so D: Companions, partners, consecrated Friends,  
 Shall we behold them AB

And neither pair be broken ? Nay perchance  
 It is too late already for such hope, 265  
 The Dalesmen may have aimed the deadly tube,  
 And parted them ; or haply both are gone  
 One death, and that were mercy given to both.  
 Recal my song the ungenerous thought ; forgive,  
 Thrice favoured Region, the conjecture harsh 270  
 Of such inhospitable penalty,  
 Inflicted upon confidence so pure.  
 Ah, if I wished to follow where the sight  
 Of all that is before my eyes, the voice  
 Which speaks from a presiding Spirit here, 275  
 Would lead me, I should whisper to myself ;  
 They who are dwellers in this holy place  
 Must needs themselves be hallowed, they require  
 No benediction from the Stranger's lips,  
 For they are blest already. None would give 280  
 The greeting "peace be with you" unto them,  
 For peace they have, it cannot but be theirs,  
 And mercy, and forbearance. Nay—not these,  
 Their healing offices a pure good-will  
 Precludes, and charity beyond the bounds 285  
 Of charity—an overflowing love,  
 Not for the Creature only, but for all  
 That is around them, love for every thing  
 Which in this happy Region they behold !

266 Dalesmen D *corr.*: Shepherd A-D; aimed D: seized AB

267 so D *corr.*: And parted them, incited by a prize

Which for the sake of those (her) he loves at home

And for the Lamb upon the mountain tops

He should have spared ; A-C, but C omits third line

269-73 so D *corr.*: I cannot look upon this favoured Vale

But that I seem, by harbouring this thought,

To wrong it, such unworthy recompense

Imagining of confidence so pure

Ah, if *etc.* AB

And could a Poet harbour such a thought,

Imagine such unworthy recompense

Of confidence so pure ? More natural were it

To follow without scruple where the sight D

275 speaks from D: is as AB

276-7 I should whisper to myself:

They who are BD *corr.*: . . . say unto myself *etc.* A: and not wronging what

he sees, Whisper "the dwellers" B *corr.* and D

284-5 so D *corr.*: There is no call for these ; that office Love

Performs, and charity A-D

286 an overflowing BD: a heart-delighting A

289 region B *corr.*:

valley AB

Thus do we soothe ourselves, and when the thought 290  
 Is pass'd we blame it not for having come.  
 What, if I floated down a pleasant Stream  
 And now am landed, and the motion gone,  
 Shall I reprove myself? Ah no, the Stream  
 Is flowing, and will never cease to flow, 295  
 And I shall float upon that Stream again.  
 By such forgetfulness the Soul becomes,  
 Words cannot say, how beautiful; then hail.  
 Hail to the visible Presence, hail to thee,  
 Delightful Valley, habitation fair! 300  
 And to whatever else of outward form  
 Can give us inward help, can purify,  
 And elevate, and harmonise, and soothe,  
 And steal away, and for a while deceive  
 And lap in pleasing rest, and bear us on 305  
 Without desire in full complacency,  
 Contemplating perfection absolute  
 And entertained as in a placid sleep.

But not betrayed by tenderness of mind  
 That feared, or wholly overlook'd the truth, 310  
 Did we come hither, with romantic hope  
 To find, in midst of so much loveliness,  
 Love, perfect love; of so much majesty  
 A like majestic frame of mind in those  
 Who here abide, the persons like the place. 315  
 Not from such hope, or aught of such belief  
 Hath issued any portion of the joy  
 Which I have felt this day. An awful voice,  
 'Tis true, hath in my walks been often heard,  
 Sent from the mountains or the sheltered fields, 320  
 Shout after shout—reiterated whoop  
 In manner of a bird that takes delight  
 In answering to itself; or like a hound  
 Single at chase among the lonely woods,  
 His yell repeating; yet it was in truth 325  
 A human voice—a Spirit of coming night,  
 How solemn when the sky is dark, and earth  
 Not dark, nor yet enlightened, but by snow  
 Made visible, amid a noise of winds

309 But neither lull'd nor lost nor rapt away A *corr.* 310 wholly  
 overlook'd A *corr.*: utterly forgot A 313 perfect BD: purest A  
 326-9 so B *corr.*: A human voice how awful in the gloom  
 Of coming night amid A

And bleatings manifold of mountain sheep, 330  
 Which in that iteration recognize  
 Their summons, and are gathering round for food,  
 Devoured with keenness ere to grove or bank  
 Or rocky *bield* with patience they retire.

That very voice, which, in some timid mood 335  
 Of superstitious fancy, might have seemed  
 Awful as ever stray Demoniac uttered,  
 His steps to govern in the Wilderness;  
 Or as the Norman Curfew's regular beat,  
 To hearths when first they darkened at the knell: 340  
 That Shepherd's voice, it may have reached mine ear  
 Debased and under profanation, made  
 The ready Organ of articulate sounds  
 From ribaldry, impiety, or wrath  
 Issuing when shame hath ceased to check the brawls 345  
 Of some abused Festivity—so be it.  
 I came not dreaming of unruffled life,  
 Untainted manners; born among the hills,  
 Bred also there, I wanted not a scale  
 To regulate my hopes. Pleased with the good, 350  
 I shrink not from the evil with disgust,  
 Or with immoderate pain. I look for Man,  
 The common Creature of the brotherhood,  
 Differing but little from the Man elsewhere,  
 For selfishness, and envy, and revenge, 355  
 Ill neighbourhood—pity that this should be—  
 Flattery and double-dealing, strife and wrong.

Yet is it something gained, it is in truth  
 A mighty gain, that Labour here preserves  
 His rosy face, a Servant only here 360  
 Of the fire-side, or of the open field,  
 A Freeman, therefore, sound and unimpaired;  
 That extreme penury is here unknown,  
 And cold and hunger's abject wretchedness,  
 Mortal to body, and the heaven-born mind; 365

330–4 mountain sheep . . . retire D: sheep that know  
 Their summons, and are gathering round for food,  
 That voice the same, the very same that breath  
 Which was an utterance awful as the wind  
 Or any sound the mountains ever heard AB

335–40 *not in AB*

343–6 *so* D: An organ for the sounds articulate  
 Of ribaldry and blasphemy, and wrath  
 When drunkenness hath kindled senseless frays AB

That they who want, are not too great a weight  
 For those who can relieve. Here may the heart  
 Breathe in the air of fellow-suffering  
 Dreadless, as in a kind of fresher breeze  
 Of her own native element, the hand 370  
 Be ready and unwearied without plea  
 From tasks too frequent, or beyond its power  
 For languor, or indifference, or despair.  
 And as these lofty barriers break the force  
 Of winds, this deep Vale,—as it doth in part 375  
 Conceal us from the Storm,—so here abides  
 A Power and a protection for the mind,  
 Dispensed indeed to other solitudes,  
 Favored by noble privilege like this,  
 Where kindred independence of estate 380  
 Is prevalent, where he who tills the field,  
 He, happy Man! is Master of the field,  
 And treads the mountains which his Fathers trod.

Not less than half-way up yon Mountain's side  
 Behold a dusky spot, a grove of Firs, 385  
 That seems still smaller than it is; this grove  
 Is haunted—by what ghost? a gentle Spirit  
 Of memory faithful to the call of love;  
 For, as reports the Dame, whose fire sends up  
 Yon curling smoke from the grey cot below, 390  
 The trees (her first-born Child being then a babe)  
 Were planted by her husband and herself,  
 That ranging o'er the high and houseless ground

- 376 so here there is  
 Or seems to be for it befits [me?] yet  
 New comer as I am to speak in doubt *A which ends here*  
 383/4 Hence, and from other local circumstance  
 . In this enclosure many of the old  
 Substantial virtues have a firmer tone  
 Than in the bare and ordinary world *so B, followed by the two stories*  
*given in Excursion vi. 1080–1190 q.v. app. crit.; then*  
 From yonder [ ] grey stone that stands alone  
 Not less than half-way up the mountain side  
 Close to the foaming stream look up and see  
 A dusky spot, a little grove of Firs (385)  
 387–92 *so D*: As from the dame I learn'd who dwells below,  
 Just six weeks younger than her eldest boy,  
 Was planted B  
 393–8 *so D corr.*: For a convenient shelter which in storm  
 Their sheep might draw to, "and they knew it well",  
 Said she, "for thither do we bear their food BD

Their sheep might neither want (from perilous storms  
 Of winter, nor from summer's sultry heat) 395  
 A friendly covert. "And they knew it well,"  
 Said she, "for thither as the trees grew up,  
 We to the patient creatures carried food  
 In times of heavy snow." She then began  
 In fond obedience to her private thoughts 400  
 To speak of her dead Husband: is there not  
 An art, a music, and a strain of words  
 That shall be life, the acknowledged voice of life,  
 Shall speak of what is done among the fields,  
 Done truly there, or felt, of solid good 405  
 And real evil, yet be sweet withal,  
 More grateful, more harmonious than the breath,  
 The idle breath of softest pipe attuned  
 To pastoral fancies? Is there such a stream,  
 Pure and unsullied, flowing from the heart 410  
 With motions of true dignity and grace?  
 Or must we seek that stream where Man is not?  
 Methinks I could repeat in tuneful verse,  
 Delicious as the gentlest breeze that sounds  
 Through that aerial fir-grove, could preserve 415  
 Some portion of its human history  
 As gathered from the Matron's lips, and tell  
 Of tears that have been shed at sight of it,  
 And moving dialogues between this Pair,  
 Who in their prime of wedlock, with joint hands 420  
 Did plant the grove, now flourishing, while they  
 No longer flourish, he entirely gone,  
 She withering in her loneliness. Be this  
 A task above my skill; the silent mind  
 Has her own treasures, and I think of these, 425  
 Love what I see, and honour humankind.

No, we are not alone, we do not stand,  
 My Sister, here misplaced and desolate,  
 Loving what no one cares for but ourselves;  
 We shall not scatter through the plains and rocks 430  
 Of this fair Vale, and o'er its spacious heights  
 Unprofitable kindness, bestowed  
 On objects unaccustomed to the gifts  
 Of feeling, which were cheerless and forlorn

412 that stream D *corr.*: these things BD

427-8 No I am not alone, we do not stand

My Emma in a solitary world R

428 Sister D: Emma RB

- But few weeks past, and would be so again 435  
 Were we not here; we do not tend a lamp  
 Whose lustre we alone participate,  
 Which shines dependent upon us alone,  
 Mortal though bright, a dying, dying flame.  
 Look where we will, some human heart has been 440  
 Before us with its offering; not a tree  
 Sprinkles these little pastures but the same  
 Hath furnished matter for a thought; perchance,  
 For some one serves as a familiar friend.  
 Joy spreads, and sorrow spreads; and this whole Vale, 445  
 Home of untutored Shepherds as it is,  
 Swarms with sensation, as with gleams of sunshine,  
 Shadows or breezes, scents or sounds. Nor deem  
 These feelings, though subservient more than ours  
 To every day's demand for daily bread, 450  
 And borrowing more their spirit, and their shape  
 From self-respecting interests, deem them not  
 Unworthy therefore, and unhallowed: no,  
 They lift the animal being, do themselves  
 By Nature's kind and ever-present aid 455  
 Refine the selfishness from which they spring,  
 Redeem by love the individual sense  
 Of anxiousness with which they are combined.  
 And thus it is that fitly they become  
 Associates in the joy of purest minds, 460  
 They blend therewith congenially: meanwhile,  
 Calmly they breathe their own undying life  
 Through this their mountain sanctuary; long,  
 Oh long may it remain inviolate,  
 Diffusing health and sober cheerfulness, 465  
 And giving to the moments as they pass
- 436 so D corr.: If we were not; RBD 438 shines D corr.: is RBD  
 440 heart RB: hand D 442 Sprinkles] Stands in R 444  
 For . . serves D: To . . is RB 447 sunshine BD: light R  
 450 To the necessities of daily life R  
 454-6 so B corr.: Many are pure, the best of them are pure,  
     The best, and these, remember, most abound,  
     Are fit associates of the worthiest joy,  
     Joy of the highest and the purest minds RB  
 462/3 Lowly and unassuming as it is RB  
 463-70 Labour they sweeten, and they soften care  
     Diffusing through this mountain sanctuary  
     —O long may it remain inviolate—  
     Health, innocence, and sober cheerfulness  
     And little boons of animating thought,  
     As faithfully as morning comes with light R

Their little boons of animating thought  
 That sweeten labour, make it seen and felt  
 To be no arbitrary weight imposed,  
 But a glad function natural to Man.

470

Fair proof of this, Newcomer though I be,  
 Already have I gained. The inward frame  
 Though slowly opening, opens every day  
 With process not unlike to that which cheers  
 A pensive Stranger, journeying at his leisure 475  
 Through some Helvetian dell, when low-hung mists  
 Break up, and are beginning to recede;  
 How pleased he is where thin and thinner grows  
 The veil, or where it parts at once, to spy  
 The dark pines thrusting forth their spiky heads; 480  
 To watch the spreading lawns with cattle grazed,  
 Then to be greeted by the scattered huts,  
 As they shine out; and *see* the streams whose murmur  
 Had soothed his ear while they were hidden: how pleased  
 To have about him, which way e'er he goes, 485  
 Something on every side concealed from view,  
 In every quarter something visible,  
 Half-seen or wholly, lost and found again,  
 Alternate progress and impediment,  
 And yet a growing prospect in the main. 490

Such pleasure now is mine, albeit forced,  
 Herein less happy than the Traveller  
 To cast from time to time a painful look  
 Upon unwelcome things, which unawares

472 gained D: seen RB

474-6 *so* D *corr.*: Nor am I less delighted with the show  
 As it unfolds itself, now here, now there,  
 Than is the passing Traveller, when his way  
 Lies through some region then first trod by him  
 (Say this fair valley's self) when low-hung mists RBD

478-82 *so* D *corr.*: How pleased he is to greet the rocks and lawns  
 As they put off their Veil; the spiky Pines  
 As they thrust forth their heads; the scatter'd Huts *etc.* D  
 478-85 How pleased he is to hear the murmuring streams  
 The many voices, whence he knows not, pleased  
 To have about him *etc.* RB

490 *so* B, D *corr.*: Yet in the main a prospect spread and spreading B *corr.*,  
 D

491-3 *so* B *corr.*: Such pleasure now is mine, and what if I,  
 Less happy than the Traveller in this  
 Am sometimes forced to cast a painful look RB

Reveal themselves; not therefore is my heart 495  
 Depressed, nor does it fear what is to come,  
 But confident, enriched at every glance.  
 The more I see the more delight my mind  
 Receives, or by reflexion can create.  
 Truth justifies herself, and as she dwells 500  
 With Hope, who would not follow where she leads ?

Nor let me pass unheeded other loves  
 Where no fear is, and humbler sympathies.  
 Already hath sprung up within my heart  
 A liking for the small grey horse that bears 505  
 The paralytic Man, and for the brute—  
 In Scripture sanctified—the patient brute,  
 On which the cripple, in the Quarry maim'd,  
 Rides to and fro: I know them and their ways.  
 The famous Sheep-dog, first in all the Vale, 510  
 Though yet to me a Stranger, will not be  
 A Stranger long; nor will the blind man's guide,  
 Meek and neglected thing, of no renown!  
 Soon will peep forth the primrose; ere it fades  
 Friends shall I have at dawn, blackbird and thrush 515  
 To rouse me, and a hundred Warblers more;

495 heart B *corr.*, D: mind RB 498-500 *so* B *corr.*: . . . the more  
 is my delight, Truth, *etc.* RB 499 create D *corr.*: extract BD

502 pass unheeded B *corr.*: overlook those B  
 502-4 Nor is it a mean praise of rural life

And solitude that they do favour most,  
 Most frequently call forth and best sustain  
 These mild and pure affections, and to me  
 How much do they endear the quietness  
 Of this sublime retirement. I begin  
 Already to inscribe upon my heart R

503/4 That have to me endeared the quietness

Of this sublime retirement. I begin— B (*deleted*)

504 hath sprung up within D *corr.*: is inscribed upon BD 506 for  
 the brute B *corr.*, D: I know the Ass RB 507 *not in* R; sancti-  
 fied D *corr.*: glorified BD

514-20 *so* D *corr.*: Whoever liv'd a winter in one place,

Beneath the shelter of one Cottage roof,  
 And has not had his Redbreast or his Wren ?  
 I have them both, and I shall have my Thrush  
 In spring-time, and a hundred Warblers more  
 And if the banish'd Eagle pair return,  
 Helvellyn's Eagles to their antient Hold  
 Then shall I see, shall claim with those two Birds  
 Acquaintance, as they soar amid the Heavens RB (*D partly illegible*)

And if those Eagles to their ancient Hold  
 Return, Helvellyn's Eagles! with the Pair  
 From my own door I shall be free to claim  
 Acquaintance as they sweep from cloud to cloud. 520  
 The Owl that gives the name to Owlet-Crag  
 Have I heard whooping, and he soon will be  
 A chosen one of my regards. See there  
 The Heifer in yon little croft belongs  
 To one who holds it dear; with duteous care 525  
 She reared it, and in speaking of her charge  
 I heard her scatter some endearing words  
 Domestic, and in spirit motherly  
 She being herself a Mother, happy Beast  
 If the caresses of a human voice 530  
 Can make it so, and care of human hands.

And ye as happy under Nature's care,  
 Strangers to me, and all men, or at least  
 Strangers to all particular amity,  
 All intercourse of knowledge or of love 535  
 That parts the individual from his kind,  
 Whether in large communities ye keep  
 From year to year, not shunning Man's abode,  
 A settled residence, or be from far,  
 Wild creatures, and of many homes, that come 540  
 The gift of winds, and whom the winds again  
 Take from us at your pleasure—yet shall ye  
 Not want, for this, your own subordinate place  
 In my affections. Witness the delight  
 With which erewhile I saw that multitude 545  
 Wheel through the sky, and see them now at rest,

522 whooping D *corr.*: shouting RBD 527 once a word or two RB  
 528 A term domestic yea and motherly R 539 Your stationary  
 homes R 543/4 According to your claims, an under-place RB  
 544-9 Bright shines the Sun; a wintry stillness blends  
 Its pensive influence with the warmth of Spring,  
 Spring's vital warmth pervading earth and air,  
 And chearingly reflected from the folds  
 And fleecy skirts of clouds, that keeping each  
 Their form and station decorate the front  
 Of the clear sky; and from the naked rocks  
 And stony Hills imbued with tender light.  
 That multitude which through the [ ? ] peace  
 Of the past day were seen to soar aloft  
 And in the azure element repeat  
 Their evolution are assembled now  
 Right at the centre of the glassy lake:  
 There have they settled from disturbance safe

Yet not at rest, upon the glassy lake.  
 They *cannot* rest, they gambol like young whelps;  
 Active as lambs, and overcome with joy,  
 They try all frolic motions; flutter, plunge, 550  
 And beat the passive water with their wings.  
 Too distant are they for plain view, but lo!  
 Those little fountains, sparkling in the sun,  
 Betray their occupation, rising up,  
 First one and then another silver spout, 555  
 As one or other takes the fit of glee,  
 Fountains and spouts, yet somewhat in the guise  
 Of play-thing fire-works, that on festal nights  
 Sparkle about the feet of wanton boys.  
 —How vast the compass of this theatre, 560  
 Yet nothing to be seen but lovely pomp  
 And silent majesty; the birch-tree woods  
 Are hung with thousand thousand diamond drops  
 Of melted hoar-frost, every tiny knot  
 In the bare twigs, each little budding-place 565  
 Cased with its several bead, what myriads there  
 Upon one tree, while all the distant grove  
 That rises to the summit of the steep  
 Shows like a mountain built of silver light.  
 See yonder the same pageant, and again 570  
 Behold the universal imagery  
 Inverted, all its sun-bright features touched  
 As with the varnish, and the gloss of dreams;  
 Dreamlike the blending also of the whole  
 Harmonious landscape; all along the shore 575  
 The boundary lost, the line invisible  
 That parts the image from reality;  
 And the clear hills, as high as they ascend  
 Heavenward, so piercing deep the lake below.  
 Admonished of the days of love to come 580  
 The raven croaks, and fills the upper air

But through the uneasy spirit of delight  
 They cannot rest, they gambol like young whelps  
 Active as lambs *etc. alt. draft on verso* B

554 *so* D: Which tell what they are doing, which rise up RB 554/5  
 Spend their short lives appear and disappear B *deleted* 559 Hop  
 skip about the feet of merry boys. RB 569 Shows B *corr.*, D: Is RB  
 572-9 Inverted . . . below *so* D: At what a depth, deep in the Lake below  
 RB

574-5 *so* D *corr.*: Dreamlike the blending too; along the shore  
 The boundary (landmark) lost—the line invisible D  
 581 upper D: sunny RB

With a strange sound of genial harmony ;  
 And in and all about that playful band,  
 Incapable although they be of rest,  
 And in their fashion very rioters, 585  
 There is a stillness, and they seem to make  
 Calm revelry in that their calm abode.  
 Them leaving to their joyous hours I pass,  
 Pass with a thought the life of the whole year  
 That is to come, the throng of woodland flowers, 590  
 And lillies that will dance upon the waves.

Say boldly then that solitude is not  
 Where these things are: he truly is alone,  
 He of the multitude whose eyes are doomed  
 To hold a vacant commerce day by day 595  
 With objects wanting life, repelling love ;  
 He by the vast Metropolis immured,  
 Where pity shrinks from unremitting calls,  
 Where numbers overwhelm humanity,  
 And neighbourhood serves rather to divide 600  
 Than to unite. What sighs more deep than his,  
 Whose nobler will hath long been sacrificed ;  
 Who must inhabit, under a black sky,  
 A City where, if indifference to disgust  
 Yield not, to scorn, or sorrow, living Men 605  
 Are oftentimes to their fellow-men no more  
 Than to the Forest Hermit are the leaves  
 That hang aloft in myriads—nay, far less,  
 For they protect his walk from sun and shower,  
 Swell his devotion with their voice in storms, 610  
 And whisper while the stars twinkle among them  
 His lullaby. From crowded streets remote,

588 *so D corr.*: I leave them to their pleasure and I pass RBD 590

woodland D *corr.*: mountain RBD 591 waves D: lake RB

592 *so D corr.*: Then boldly say D *corr.*, RB

596-606 *so D corr.*: With that which he can neither know nor love,

Dead things, or living men to him no more D

With that which he can neither know nor love,

Dead things, to him thrice dead, or worse than this

With swarms of life, and worse than all, of men,

His fellow men that are to him no more RB

601 *so D corr.*: Yes, yes there is a weight

Of loneliness, he can report of it D

608-15 *so D corr.*: nay far less

Far less for aught that comforts or defends

Or lulls or cheers. Society is here

The true community, the noblest etc. B (D *pasted over*)

Far from the living and dead wilderness  
 Of the thronged World, Society is here  
 A true Community, a genuine frame 615  
 Of many into one incorporate.  
*That* must be looked for here, paternal sway,  
 One household, under God, for high and low,  
 One family, and one mansion; to themselves  
 Appropriate, and divided from the world 620  
 As if it were a cave, a multitude  
 Human and brute, possessors undisturbed  
 Of this Recess, their legislative Hall,  
 Their Temple, and their glorious Dwelling-place.

Dismissing therefore, all Arcadian dreams, 625  
 All golden fancies of the golden Age,  
 The bright array of shadowy thoughts from times  
 That were before all time, or are to be  
 Ere time expire, the pageantry that stirs  
 And will be stirring when our eyes are fixed 630  
 On lovely objects, and we wish to part  
 With all remembrance of a jarring world,  
 —Take we at once this one sufficient hope,  
 What need of more? that we shall neither droop,  
 Nor pine for want of pleasure in the life 635  
 Scattered about us, nor through dearth of aught  
 That keeps in health the insatiable mind;  
 That we shall have for knowledge and for love  
 Abundance; and that, feeling as we do  
 How goodly, how exceeding fair, how pure 640  
 From all reproach is yon ethereal vault,

623 Recess] deep vale R

625–31 Dismiss[ing] therefore all Arcadian dreams  
 All golden fancies shadows from the times  
 That were before all time, that perfect age  
 How dear to think of when we long to part R

628 are BD: is D *corr.* 629 so D *corr.*: When time is not RBD

632/3 Give entrance to this sober truth, avow  
 That Nature to this favoured (favourite B) spot of ours  
 Yields no exemption but her awful rights  
 Enforces to the utmost, and exacts  
 Her tribute of inevitable pain  
 And that the sting is added, man himself  
 For ever busy to afflict himself,  
 Yet temper this with one sufficient hope, (633) RB

636 Scattered D *corr.*: Which is RBD 641 yon . vault B *corr.*,  
 D: this . frame B

And this deep Vale its earthly counterpart,  
 By which, and under which, we are enclosed  
 To breathe in peace, we shall moreover find  
 (If sound, and what we ought to be ourselves, 645  
 If rightly we observe and justly weigh)  
 The Inmates not unworthy of their home  
 The Dwellers of their Dwelling.

And if this  
 Were otherwise, we have within ourselves  
 Enough to fill the present day with joy, 650  
 And overspread the future years with hope,  
 Our beautiful and quiet home, enriched  
 Already with a Stranger whom we love  
 Deeply, a Stranger of our Father's House,  
 A never-resting Pilgrim of the Sea, 655  
 Who finds at last an hour to his content  
 Beneath our roof. And others whom we love  
 Will seek us also, Sisters of our hearts,  
 And One, like them, a Brother of our hearts,  
 Philosopher and Poet, in whose sight 660  
 These Mountains will rejoice with open joy.  
 —Such is our wealth; O Vale of Peace, we are  
 And must be, with God's will, a happy Band.

Yet 'tis not to enjoy that we exist,  
 For that end only; something must be done. 665  
 I must not walk in unreprieved delight  
 These narrow bounds, and think of nothing more,  
 No duty that looks further, and no care.  
 Each Being has his office, lowly some  
 And common, yet all worthy if fulfilled 670  
 With zeal, acknowledgment that with the gift  
 Keeps pace a harvest answering to the seed—  
 Of ill-advised Ambition and of Pride  
 I would stand clear, but yet to me I feel  
 That an internal brightness is vouchsafed 675  
 That must not die, that must not pass away.  
 Why does this inward lustre fondly seek,

649 so D *corr.*: Were not, we have enough BD

648–60 And if this

Were not, our habitation will be sought  
 By kindred spirits, Sisters of our hearts  
 And Brothers of our love [by whose aspect ?]  
 By whose example aided we shall strive  
 To make our minds as lovely as the scene  
 Which we behold, as fit as fair abode B *another draft*

And gladly blend with outward fellowship ?  
 Why do *they* shine around me whom I love ?  
 Why do they teach me whom I thus revere ? 680  
 Strange question, yet it answers not itself.  
 That humble Roof embowered among the trees,  
 That calm fire-side, it is not even in them,  
 Blest as they are, to furnish a reply,  
 That satisfies and ends in perfect rest. 685  
 Possessions have I that are solely mine,  
 Something within which yet is shared by none,  
 Not even the nearest to me and most dear,  
 Something which power and effort may impart,  
 I would impart it, I would spread it wide, 690  
 Immortal in the world which is to come.  
 Forgive me if I add another claim,  
 And would not wholly perish even in this,  
 Lie down and be forgotten in the dust,  
 I and the modest Partners of my days 695  
 Making a silent company in death ;  
 Love, Knowledge, all my manifold delights  
 All buried with me without monument  
 Or profit unto any but ourselves.  
 It must not be, if I, divinely taught, 700  
 Be privileged to speak as I have felt  
 Of what in man is human or divine.

While yet an innocent Little-one, with a heart  
 That doubtless wanted not its tender moods,  
 I breathed (for this I better recollect) 705  
 Among wild appetites and blind desires,  
 Motions of savage instinct my delight  
 And exaltation. Nothing at that time  
 So welcome, no temptation half so dear  
 As that which urged me to a daring feat. 710  
 Deep pools, tall trees, black chasms, and dizzy crags,  
 And tottering towers ; I loved to stand and read  
 Their looks forbidding, read and disobey,  
 Sometimes in act, and evermore in thought.  
 With impulses that scarcely were by these 715  
 Surpassed in strength, I heard of danger, met  
 Or sought with courage ; enterprize forlorn  
 By one, sole keeper of his own intent,  
 Or by a resolute few who for the sake

679 so D: Why shine they round me thus whom thus I love ? B  
 715 that scarcely D: which only B

Of glory, fronted multitudes in arms. 720  
 Yea to this hour I cannot read a tale  
 Of two brave Vessels matched in deadly fight,  
 And fighting to the death, but I am pleased  
 More than a wise man ought to be. I wish,  
 Fret, burn, and struggle, and in soul am there; 725  
 But me hath Nature tamed, and bade to seek  
 For other agitations, or be calm;  
 Hath dealt with me as with a turbulent Stream,  
 Some nursling of the mountains, whom she leads  
 Through quiet meadows, after he has learnt 730  
 His strength, and had his triumph and his joy,  
 His desperate course of tumult and of glee.  
 That which in stealth by Nature was performed  
 Hath Reason sanctioned. Her deliberate Voice  
 Hath said, "Be mild and cleave to gentle things, 735  
 Thy glory and thy happiness be there.  
 Nor fear, though thou confide in me, a want  
 Of aspirations that *have* been, of foci  
 To wrestle with, and victory to complete,  
 Bounds to be leapt, darkness to be explored, 740  
 All that inflamed thy infant heart, the love,  
 The longing, the contempt, the undaunted quest,  
 All shall survive—though changed their office, all  
 Shall live,—it is not in their power to die."

Then farewell to the Warrior's schemes, farewell 745  
 The forwardness of Soul which looks that way  
 Upon a less incitement than the cause  
 Of Liberty endangered, and farewell  
 That other hope, long mine, the hope to fill  
 The heroic trumpet with the Muse's breath! 750  
 Yet in this peaceful Vale we will not spend  
 Unheard-of days, though loving peaceful thoughts.

721 *so D corr.*: Yea to this day I swell with like desire.

I cannot at this moment read BD

725 I burn, I struggle B 729 whom B *corr.*: which BD 730 he  
 B *corr.*, D: it B 735 cleave to D *corr.*: love all BD

729–32 Nursed in the darkness of some mountain cave

And trained and exercised in rocky strath

And headlong steeps, which after it has run

Its desperate course, triumphantly she leads

Through flowery meadows and embowering groves.

*another draft* B

745 schemes D *corr.*: shield D: deeds B 749 *so D*: All hope which  
 once and long was mine, to fill B 752 Unheard of D: Inglorious B

A Voice shall speak, and what will be the Theme ?  
 On Man on Nature and on Human life  
 Musing in Solitude

[*For the concluding lines v. "Prospectus" of "The Excursion"*  
 (p. 3 *supra*).]

754— MS. B's version is as follows:

On Man on Nature and on human life  
 Thinking in solitude, from time to time  
 I feel sweet passions traversing my soul  
 Like Music, unto these, where'er I may  
 I would give utterance in numerous verse:  
 Of truth, of grandeur, beauty love and hope  
 Hope for this earth and hope beyond the grave  
 Of virtue and of intellectual power  
 Of blessed consolations in distress  
 Of joy in widest commonalty spread  
 Of the individual mind that keeps its own  
 Inviolate retirement, and consists  
 With being limitless, the one great Life  
 I sing, fit audience let me find though few—  
 Fit audience find tho' few, thus pray'd the Bard  
 Holiest of Men. Urania I shall need  
 Thy guidance or a greater Muse if such  
 Descend to earth or dwell in highest heaven  
 For I must tread on shadowy ground must sink  
 Deep, and aloft ascending breathe in worlds  
 To which the Heaven of Heavens is but a veil.  
 All strength, all terror, single or in bands  
 That ever was put forth in personal forms,  
 Jehovah with his thunder and the quire  
 Of shouting Angels and the empyreal thrones  
 I pass them unalarmed. The darkest Pit  
 Of the profoundest Hell and chaos, night,  
 Nor aught of [     ] vacancy scoop'd out  
 By help of dreams can breed such fear and awe  
 As fall upon us often when we look  
 Into our minds, into the Mind of Man,  
 My haunt and the main region of my song.  
 Beauty whose living home is the green earth  
 Surpassing the most fair ideal Forms  
 Which craft of delicate spirits hath compos'd  
 From earth's materials waits upon my steps  
 Pitches her tents before me where I move  
 An hourly Neighbour. Paradise and groves  
 Elysian, fortunate (islands) fields like those  
 In the deep ocean wherefore should they be  
 A History or but a dream, when minds  
 Once wedded to this outward frame of things  
 In love find these the growth of common day.

I, long before the blessed hour arrives,  
Would sing in solitude the spousal verse  
Of this great consummation, would proclaim  
Speaking of nothing more than what we are  
How exquisitely the individual Mind,  
And the progressive powers perhaps no less  
Of the whole species to the external world  
Is fitted, and how exquisitely too,  
Theme this but little heard of among men,  
The external world is fitted to the mind  
And the creation, (by no lower name  
Can it be call'd), which they with blended might  
Accomplish: this is my great argument  
Such [     ] foregoing if I oft  
Must turn elsewhere and travel near the tribes  
And fellowships of men and see ill sights  
Of passions ravenous from each other's rage  
Must hear humanity in fields and groves  
Pipe solitary anguish or must hang  
Brooding above the fierce confederate storm  
Of Sorrow barricadoed evermore  
Within the walls of Cities, may these sounds  
Have their authentic comment that even these  
Hearing, I be not heartless or forlorn.  
Come thou prophetic Spirit, Soul of Man  
Thou human Soul of the wide earth that hast  
Thy metropolitan Temple in the hearts  
Of mighty Poets, unto me vouchsafe  
Thy guidance, teach me to discern and part  
Inherent things from casual, what is fixed  
From fleeting, that my verse may live and be  
Even as a light hung up in heaven to cheer  
Mankind in times to come. And if with this  
I blend more lowly matter with the thing  
Contemplated describe the mind and man  
Contemplating and who and what he was  
The transitory Being that beheld  
This vision when and where and how he lived  
With all his little realties of life  
Be not the labour useless: if such theme  
With highest things may [mingle MS. 1] then great God  
Thou who art breath and being, way and guide  
And power and understanding, may my life  
Express the image of a better time  
More wise desires and simple manners, nurse  
My heart in genuine freedom, all pure thoughts  
Be with me and uphold me to the end.

## APPENDIX B

FRAGMENTS of blank verse akin to *The Prelude* and *The Excursion*, written at a time when Wordsworth was contemplating *The Recluse*, or working at *The Ruined Cottage* and *The Pedlar*. For other fragments *v. Prel.* E. de S., pp. xliii, 512, 521-2, 524, 529-30, 548, 553-9, 563, 592-4, 600-5, 606.

## I

*From the verso of a loose foolscap sheet on which an early draft of  
"The Old Cumberland Beggar" is written*

YET once again do I behold the forms  
Of these huge mountains, and yet once again,  
Standing beneath these elms, I hear thy voice,  
Beloved Derwent, that peculiar voice  
Heard in the stillness of the evening air,  
Half-heard and half-created.

## II

*Fragments from the Alfoxden note-book*

## i

there would he stand  
In the still covert of some [ ? lonesome ] rock,  
Or gaze upon the moon until its light  
Fell like a strain of music on his soul  
And seem'd to sink into his very heart.

## ii

Why is it we feel  
So little for each other, but for this,  
That we with nature have no sympathy,  
Or with such things as have no power to hold  
Articulate language ?  
And never for each other shall we feel  
As we may feel, till we have sympathy  
With nature in her forms inanimate,  
With objects such as have no power to hold  
Articulate language. In all forms of things  
There is a mind.

## iii

Of unknown modes of being which on earth,  
Or in the heavens, or in the heavens and earth

Exist by mighty combinations, bound  
Together by a link, and with a soul  
Which makes all one.

## iv

To gaze

On that green hill and on those scattered trees  
And feel a pleasant consciousness of life  
In the impression of that loveliness  
Until the sweet sensation called the mind  
Into itself, by image from without  
Unvisited, and all her reflex powers  
Wrapped in a still dream [of] forgetfulness.

I lived without the knowledge that I lived  
Then by those beauteous forms brought back again  
To lose myself again as if my life  
Did ebb and flow with a strange mystery.

## v

solemn dreams,

Dreams beautiful as the fair hues that lie  
About the moon in clouds of various depth,  
In many clouds about the full-orb'd moon.  
Why cannot they be still those barking curs  
That so disturb the stillness of the moon  
And make the [                      ] restless ?

## vi

and beneath the star

Of evening let the steep and lonely path  
The steep path of the rocky mountain side  
Among the stillness of the mountains hear  
The panting of thy breath.

## vii

lovely as the fairy day

Which one hour after sunset the sea gains  
From the bright west when, on the bare hill-top,  
Scarce distant twenty paces, the sheep bleats  
Unseen, and darkness covers all the vales.

## viii

these populous slopes

With all their groves and with their murmurous woods,  
Giving a curious feeling to the mind  
Of peopled solitude.

## ix

where truth

Like some fair fabric in romantic glory  
 Built by the charm of sounds and symphonies  
 Uplifts her fair proportions at the call  
 Of pleasure her best minister.

## III

THERE was a spot,  
 My favourite station when the winds were up,  
 Three knots of fir-trees, small and circular,  
 Which with smooth space of open plain between  
 Stood single, for the delicate eye of taste 5  
 Too formally arranged. Right opposite  
 The central clump I loved to stand and hear  
 The wind come on and touch the several groves  
 Each after each, and thence in the dark night  
 Elicit all proportions of sweet sounds 10  
 As from an instrument. "The strains are passed,"  
 Thus often to myself I said, "the sounds  
 Even while they are approaching are gone by,  
 And now they are more distant, more and more.  
 O listen, listen, how they wind away 15  
 Still heard they wind away, heard yet and yet,  
 While the last touch they leave upon the sense  
 Is sweeter than whate'er was heard before.  
 And seems to say that they can never die."

## IV

*Fragments (1798-9) from a note-book containing the first extant MS. of  
 "Christabel"*

## i

THOU issuest from a fissure in the rock  
 Compact into one individual stream,  
 A small short stream not longer than the blade  
 Of a child's coral, then, upon the face  
 Of the steep crag diffused, thou dost flow down  
 Wide, weak and glimmering, and so thin withal  
 Thy course is like the brushing of a breeze  
 Upon a calm smooth lake. A few bold drops  
 Are there, these regularly starting forth  
 Strike somewhere on the rocks and stones beneath  
 And are thy voice, for thou wert silent else.

III 4-5 And for the poet's or the painter's eye *Alf.* MS. 7 clump]  
 grove *Alf.* MS.

## ii

The leaves stir not,  
 They all are steady as the cloudless sky ;  
 How deep the Quiet: all is motionless,  
 As if the life of the vast world was hushed  
 Into a breathless dream.

## iii

Oh 'tis a joy divine on summer days  
 When not a breeze is stirring, not a cloud,  
 To sit within some solitary wood,  
 Far in some lonely wood, and hear no sound  
 Which the heart does not make, or else so fit[s]  
 To its own temper that in external things  
 No longer seem internal difference  
 All melts away, and things that are without  
 Live in our minds as in their native home.

## iv

The clouds are standing still in the mid heavens ;  
 A perfect quietness is in the air ;  
 The ear hears not ; and yet, I know not how,  
 More than the other senses does it hold  
 A manifest communion with the heart.

## v

The sl[ender ?] dandelion bows his head  
 With graceful [motion ?] ; touched by the same breeze  
 The low geranium shivers wantonly.  
 Child art thou of the mountains, infant [stream ?]  
 A Brother of the stormy breeze ; these flowers  
 Are they not all thy neighbours ? yet with thee  
 Do they maintain no visible fellowship,  
 Nor can I say that aught which they possess,  
 Of garb or colour is a gift of thine.

## vi

There is creation in the eye,  
 Nor less in all the other senses ; powers  
 They are that colour, model, and combine  
 The things perceived with such an absolute  
 Essential energy that we may say  
 That those most godlike faculties of ours  
 At one and the same moment are the mind  
 And the mind's minister. In many a walk  
 At evening or by moonlight, or reclined  
 At midday upon beds of forest moss,

5

10

Have we to Nature and her impulses  
 Of our whole being made free gift, and when  
 Our trance had left us, oft have we, by aid  
 Of the impressions which it left behind,  
 Looked inward on ourselves, and learned, perhaps, 15  
 Something of what we are. Nor in those hours  
 Did we destroy [                      ]  
 The original impression of delight,  
 But by such retrospect it was recalled  
 To yet a second and a second life,  
 While in this excitation of the mind 20  
 A vivid pulse of sentiment and thought  
 Beat palpably within us, and all shades  
 Of consciousness were ours.

## vii

Long had I stood and looked into the west,  
 Where clouds and mountain tops and gleams of light,  
 Children of glory all [                      ]  
 Made one society and seemed to be  
 Of the same nature; long I stood and looked, 5  
 But when my thoughts began to fail, I turned  
 Towards a grove, a spot which well I knew,  
 For oftentimes its sympathies had fallen  
 Like a refreshing dew upon my heart;  
 I stretch[ed] myself beneath the shade 10  
 And soon the stirring and inquisitive mind  
 Was laid asleep; the godlike senses gave  
 Short impulses of life that seemed to tell  
 Of our existence, and then passed away.

## viii

The moon is in the East, I see her not;  
 But to the summit of the arch of heaven  
 She whitens o'er the azure of the sky  
 With thin and milky gleams of visible light.

## ix

For let the impediment be what it may  
 His hands must clothe and nourish them, and [thence ?]  
 From hour to hour so constantly he feels  
 An obligation pressing him with weight  
 Inevitable, that all offices 5  
 Which want this single tendency appear  
 Or trivial or redundant; hence remains  
 So little to be done that can assume

The appearance of a voluntary act,  
 That his affections in their very core 10  
 Are false, there is no freedom in his love.  
 Nor would he err perhaps who should assert  
 That this perceiv'd necessity creates  
 The same constriction of the heart, the same  
 [            ] in those with whom he lives, 15  
 His wife and children. What then can we hope  
 From one who is the worst of slaves, the slave  
 Of his own home ? The light that shines abroad,  
 How can it lead him to an act of love ?  
 Whom can he comfort ? Will the afflicted turn 20  
 Their steps to him, or will the eye of grief  
 And sorrow seek him ? Is the name of friend  
 Known to the poor man ? Whence is he to hear  
 The sweet creative voice of gratitude ?

## V

*From MS. 18 A, the note-book containing MS. D of*  
*"The Ruined Cottage" etc. (v. p. 404)*

## i

THERE are who tell us that in recent times  
 We have been great discoverers, that by dint  
 Of nice experience we have lately given  
 To education principles as fixed  
 And plain as those of a mechanic trade ;  
 Fair books and pure have been composed, that act  
 Upon the infant mind as does the sun  
 Upon a flower. In the corrected scheme  
 Of modern days all error is block'd out  
 So jealously, that wisdom thrives apace,  
 And in our very boyhood we become  
 Familiar friends with cause and consequence.  
 Great feats have been performed, a smooth high-way,  
 So they assert, has lately overbridged  
 The random chaos of futurity,  
 Hence all our steps are firm, and we are made  
 Strong in the power of knowledge. Ample cause  
 Why we, now living in this happy age,  
 Should bless ourselves. For, briefly, 'tis maintained  
 We now have rules and theories so precise  
 That by the inspection of unwearied eyes  
 We can secure infallible results.  
 But if the shepherd to his flock should point  
 The herb which each should feed on, were it not

Service redundant and ridiculous ?  
 And they, the tutors of our youth, our guides  
 And Masters, Wardens of our faculties,  
 And stewards of our labour, watchful men  
 And skilful in the usury of time,  
 Sages who in their prescience would coerce  
 All accidents, and tracing in their map  
 The way we ought to tread, would chain us down  
 Like engines, *etc. as Prelude* (1805), V. 383-8.  
 My playmates! brothers! nurs'd by the same years,  
 And fellow-children of the self-same hills,  
 Though we are moulded now by various fates  
 To various characters, I do not think  
 That there is one of us who cannot tell  
 How manifold the expedients, how intense  
 The unwearied passion with which nature toils  
 To win us to herself, and to impress  
 Our careless hearts with beauty and with love.  
 There was a Boy *etc. as Prelude* (1805), V. 389 *et seq.*

## ii

*Fragment with heading "Redundance"*

Not the more  
 Failed I to lengthen out my watch. I stood  
 Within the area of the frozen vale,  
 Mine eye subdued and quiet as the ear  
 Of one that listens, for even yet the scene,  
 Its fluctuating hues and surfaces,  
 And the decaying vestiges of forms,  
 Did to the dispossessing power of night  
 Impart a feeble visionary sense  
 Of movement and creation doubly felt

## VI

*Fragment found in a note-book containing a few early drafts of  
 "The Excursion" and of the "Guide to the Lakes"*

As when, upon the smooth pacific deep  
 Dense fogs, to sight impervious, have withheld  
 A gallant vessel from some bold Emprize  
 Day after day deferred, till anxious hope  
 Yields to despair, if chance a sudden breeze  
 Spring up and dissipate the veil, all hearts  
 Throb at the change, and every sail is spread  
 To speed her course along the dazzling waves  
 For recompense of glorious conquest soon  
 To be atchieved upon the astonish'd foe.

## VII

*Fragments extracted by K. (Life, i, p. 389; Poems of Wordsworth, vol. viii, p. 263) "from the miscellaneous jottings of D. W.'s Journals".*

[Composed 1800-6. First printed 1889.]

## i

ALONG the mazes of this song I go  
As inward motions of the wandering thought  
Lead me, or outward circumstance impels.  
Thus do I urge a never-ending way  
Year after year, with many a sleep between,  
Through joy and sorrow; if my lot be joy  
More joyful if it be with sorrow sooth'd.

## ii

Witness thou  
The dear companion of my lonely walk,  
My hope, my joy, my sister, and my friend,  
Or something dearer still, if reason knows  
A dearer thought, or in the heart of love  
There be a dearer name.

## iii

*To the Evening Star over Grasmere Water [July 1800?]*

The Lake is thine  
The mountains too are thine, some clouds there are,  
Some little feeble stars, but all is thine  
Thou, thou art king, and sole proprietor,  
A moon among her stars.

## iv

A mighty vale,  
Fresh as the freshest field, scoop'd out, and green  
As is the greenest billow of the sea:  
The multitude of little rocky hills,  
Rocky or green, that do like islands rise  
From the flat meadow lonely there—  
Embowering mountains, and the dome of Heaven  
And waters in the midst, a second Heaven

## APPENDIX C

## THE TUFT OF PRIMROSES

ONCE more I welcome Thee, and Thou, fair Plant,  
 Fair Primrose, hast put forth thy radiant Flowers  
 All eager to be welcomed once again.  
 O pity if the faithful Spring beguiled  
 By her accustomed hopes had come to breathe 5  
 Upon the bosom of this barren crag  
 And found thee not; but Thou art here, reviv'd  
 And beautiful as ever like a Queen  
 Smiling from thy imperishable throne,  
 And so shall keep for ages yet untold 10  
 Frail as Thou art, if the prophetic Muse  
 Be rightly trusted, so shalt Thou maintain  
 Conspicuously thy solitary state  
 In splendour unimpaired. For Thou art safe  
 From most adventurous bound of mountain sheep 15  
 By keenest hunger press'd, and from approach  
 Of the wild Goat still bolder, nor more cause,  
 Though in that sunny and obtrusive crag,  
 Hast thou to dread the desolating grasp  
 Of Child or Schoolboy, and though hand perchance 20  
 Of taller Passenger might want not power  
 To win thee, yet a thought would intervene  
 Though Thou be tempting, and that thought of love  
 Would hold him back, check'd in the first conceit  
 And impulse of such rapine. A benign 25  
 A good and friendly Spirit Thee hath watched  
 Thus far, and shall continue to preserve  
 Less for thy beauty's sake, though that might claim  
 All favour, than for pleasure which Thou shed'st  
 Down-looking and far-looking all day long 30  
 From that thy sunny and obtrusive seat  
 Upon the Travellers that do hourly climb  
 This steep, new gladness yielding to the glad,  
 And genial promises to those who droop  
 Sick, poor, or weary, or disconsolate, 35  
 Brightening at once the winter of their souls.

I have a Friend, whom Seasons as they pass'd  
 All pleased: they in her bosom damp'd no joy

1-2 See there our [ ] fair Primrose of the rock

Put forth once more her tuft of radiant flowers *alt.*

2 Fair primrose tuft hast put forth thy bright Flowers MS. A

4-7 Oh Pity if the spring had breathed in vain

On the bare crag, but see the plant revives *alt.*

And from her light step took no liberty,  
 When suddenly as lightning from a cloud 40  
 Came danger with disease; Came suddenly  
 And linger'd long, and this commanding Hill  
 Which with its rocky chambers heretofore  
 Had been to her a range of dear resort,  
 The palace of her freedom, now, sad change, 45  
 Was interdicted ground, a place of fear  
 For her, a melancholy Hill for us  
 Constrain'd to think and ponder for her sake.

Fair primrose, lonely and distinguished Flower  
 Well worthy of that honourable place 50  
 That holds thy beauty up to public view,  
 For ever parted from all neighbourhood,  
 In a calm course of meditative years,  
 Oft have I hail'd thee with serene delight;  
 This greeting is far more—it is the voice 55  
 Of a surpassing joyance. She herself  
 With her own eyes shall bless thee, ere Thou fade  
 The Prisoner shall come forth, and all the toil  
 And labours of this sharp ascent shall melt  
 Before thy mild assurances, and pain 60  
 And weakness shall pass from her like a sleep  
 Chas'd by a bright glimpse of the morning Sun.

Farewell, yet turning from thee, happy Flower,  
 With these dear thoughts, not therefore are old claims  
 Unrecognised, nor have I languid sense 65  
 Of what thy reappearance would have been  
 Without this further joy, have been to me

42 commanding] high climbing MS. A 46 Was a forbidden haunt, a  
 thought MS. A

49 O primrose-tuft, fair sisterhood of flowers,  
 One although many, many and yet one MS. alt. so MS. A, followed by  
 With what delight I hail thee, she herself, followed by 58, 59 as text.  
 MS. A

59-62 And labour of this road shall melt away  
 Before thy mild assurances, and pain  
 And weakness shall pass from her like a dream.  
 Thus have I not, thou bright imperial Flower,  
 Queen, prophet, precursor, abundant cause  
 Now above all to greet thee, long beloved  
 With a surpassing joy. *cetera desunt.* MS. A

65-7 . . . nor therefore is the sense  
 Less vivid of that pleasure which to me  
 Thy punctual re-appearance would have given MS. alt.

67 further] cause of alt.

In its pure self. For often when I pass  
 This way, while thou art in thy winter sleep,  
 Or the rank Summer hides thee from my view 70  
 Even then I think of thee. Alas how much,  
 Since I beheld and loved thee first, how much  
 Is gone, though thou be left. I would not speak  
 Of best Friends dead, or other deep heart-loss  
 Bewail'd with weeping, but by River sides 75  
 And in broad fields how many gentle loves,  
 How many mute memorials pass'd away.  
 Stately herself, though of a lowly kind  
 That little Flower remains and has survived  
 The lofty band of Firs that overtopp'd 80  
 Their antient neighbour the old Steeple Tower,  
 That consecrated File which had so oft  
 Swung in the blast, mingling their solemn strain  
 Of music with the one determin'd voice  
 From the slow funeral bell, a symphony 85  
 Most awful and affecting to the ear  
 Of him who pass'd beneath; or had dealt forth  
 Soft murmurs like the cooing of a Dove  
 Ere first distinguishably heard, and cast  
 Their dancing shadows on the flowery turf 90  
 While through the Churchyard tripp'd the bridal train  
 In festive Ribbands deck'd, and those same trees  
 By moonlight in their stillness and repose  
 Deep'nd the silence of a hundred graves.  
 Ah what a welcome! when from absence long 95  
 Returning, on the centre of the Vale  
 I look'd a first glad look, and saw them not!  
 Was it a dream? th' aerial grove, no more  
 Right in the centre of the lovely Vale  
 Suspended like a stationary cloud, 100  
 Had vanish'd like a cloud—yet say not so  
 For here and there a straggling Tree was left  
 To mourn in blanc and monumental grief,  
 To pine and wither for its fellows gone.  
 —Ill word that laid them low—unfeeling Heart 105  
 Had He who could endure that they should fall,  
 Who spared not them, nor spar'd that Sycamore high,  
 The universal glory of the Vale,  
 And did not spare the little avenue  
 Of lightly-stirring Ash-trees that sufficed 110  
 To dim the glare of Summer, and to blunt  
 The strong Wind turn'd into a gentle breeze  
 Whose freshness cheared the pavèd walk beneath,

That antient walk, which from the Vicar's door  
 Led to the Church-yard gate. Then, Grasmere, then 115  
 Thy sabbath mornings had a holy grace,  
 That incommunicable sanctity  
 Which Time and nature only can bestow  
 When from his plain abode the rustic Priest  
 Did issue forth glistening in best attire, 120  
 And down that consecrated vistic paced  
 Towards the Churchyard where his ready Flock  
 Were gathered round in sunshine or in shade;  
 While Trees and mountains echoed to the Voice  
 Of the glad bells, and all the murmuring streams 125  
 United their Soft chorus with the Song.

Now stands the Steeple naked and forlorn  
 And from the Haven, the "last Central Home",  
 To which all change conducts the Thought, looks round  
 Upon the changes of this peaceful Vale. 131  
 What sees the old grey Tower, through high or low  
 Of his domain, that calls for more regret  
 Than yon small Cottage? there it is aloft  
 And nearest to the flying clouds of three  
 Perched each above the other on the side 135  
 Of the vale's northern outlet—from below  
 And from afar,—yet say not from afar  
 For all things in this little world of ours  
 Are in one bosom of close neighbourhood.  
 The hoary steeple now beholds that roof 140  
 Laid open to the glare of Common day,  
 And marks five graves beneath his feet, in which  
 Divided by a breadth of smooth green space  
 From nearer neighbourhood they who were erewhile  
 The Inmates of that Cottage are at rest. 145  
 Death to the happy House in which they dwelt  
 Had given a long reprieve of forty years:  
 Suddenly then they disappeared—not twice  
 Had Summer scorch'd the fields, not twice had fallen  
 The first white snow upon Helvellyn's top 150  
 Before the greedy visiting was closed  
 And the long-privileged House left empty, swept  
 As by a plague; yet no rapacious plague

133 40 Than yon small Cottage. Gentle Auditor  
 Who hast a heart at leisure to receive  
 The mild enjoyments of this pensive lay,  
 Look thou, and thou alone behold . . . MS. *alt.*

Had been among them, all was gentle death,  
 One after one with intervals of peace, 155  
 A consummation, and a harmony  
 Sweet, perfect, to be wish'd for, save that here  
 Was something sounding to our mortal sense  
 Like harshness, that the old grey headed sire,  
 The oldest, he was taken last, survived 160  
 When the dear Partner of his manhood's prime,  
 His Son, and Daughter, then a blooming Wife,  
 And little smiling Grandchild were no more.  
 (Methinks that Emma hears the murmuring song  
 And the pure Ether of her Maiden soul 165  
 Is overcast, and thy maternal eyes,  
 Mary, are wet, but not with tears of grief.)  
 'Twas but a little patience and his term  
 Of solitude was spent—the aged One  
 Our very first in Eminence of years 170  
 The Patriarch of the Vale; a busy Hand  
 Yea more, a burning palm, a flashing eye  
 A restless foot, a head that beat at nights  
 Upon its pillow with a thousand schemes,  
 A Planter, and a Rearer from the Seed, 175  
 Builder had been but scanty means forbad.  
 A Man of Hope, a forward-looking Mind  
 Even to the last, he and his chearful throng  
 Of open schemes, and all his inward hoard  
 Of unsunn'd griefs, too many and too keen, 180  
 Fell with the body into gentle sleep  
 In one blest moment, and the family  
 By yet a higher privilege once more  
 Were gathered to each other.

Yet I own,

Though I can look on their associate graves 185  
 With nothing but still thoughts, that I repine,  
 It costs me something like a pain to feel  
 That after them so many of their works  
 Which round that Dwelling covertly preserved  
 The History of their unambitious lives 190  
 Have perish'd, and so soon! the Cottage-Court  
 Spread with blue gravel from the torrent's side  
 And gay with shrubs, the garden, bed and walk  
 His own creation; that embattled Host  
 Of garish tulips, fruit-trees choice and rare 195  
 And roses of all colours, which he sought

Most curiously, as generously dispers'd  
 Their kinds, to beautify his neighbours' grounds,  
 Trees of the forest, too, a stately fence  
 Planted for shelter in his manhood's prime, 200  
 And small Flowers watered by his wrinkled hand,—  
 That all are ravaged—that his Daughter's bower  
 Is creeping into shapelessness, self lost  
 In the wild wood, like a neglected image  
 Or Fancy which hath ceased to be recalled. 205  
 The jasmine, her own charge, which she had trained  
 To climb the wall, and of one flowery spray  
 Had made an Inmate, luring it from sun  
 And breeze, and from its fellows, to pervade  
 The inside of her chamber with its sweet, 210  
 I grieve to see that jasmine on the ground  
 Stretching it's desolate length, mourn that these works  
 Of love and diligence and innocent care  
 Are sullied and disgrac'd; or that a gulf  
 Hath swallowed them which renders nothing back 215  
 That they so quickly in a cave are hidden  
 Which cannot be unlock'd; upon their bloom  
 That a perpetual winter should have fallen.  
 Meanwhile the little Primrose of the rock  
 Remains, in sacred beauty, without taint 220  
 Of injury or decay, lives to proclaim  
 Her charter in the blaze of noon; salutes  
 Not unobserved the Early Shepherd-Swain  
 Or Labourer plodding at the accustomed hour  
 Home to his distant hearth, and will be seen 225  
 Long as the fullness of her bloom endures,  
 Once with an instantaneous cheer of mind  
 By stranger in late travel; as I myself  
 Have often seen her, when the last lone Thrush  
 Hath ceas'd his Vesper hymn, piercing the gloom 230  
 Of Twilight with the vigor of a star;  
 Or rather say, hung from the shadowy Rock  
 Like the broad Moon, with lustre somewhat dimm'd  
 Lovely and bright, and as the Moon secure.

Oh for some band of guardian spirits prompt 235  
 As were those human Ministers of old  
 Who daily, nightly, under various names  
 With various service stood or walked their rounds

227 With one short instantaneous *alt.* 232 Say, rather, shining  
 from her station bold *alt.* 234 Large as the Moon, *alt.*

Through the wide Forest, to protect from harm  
 The wild Beast with her young, and from the touch 240  
 Of waste the green-leav'd thicket to defend,  
 Her secret couching-place, and stately tree  
 Her canopy, and berry-bearing shrub  
 And grassy lawn, their pasture's pleasant range,  
 Continual and firm peace from outrage safe 245  
 And all annoyance, till the Sovereign comes  
 Heading his train, and through that franchise high  
 Urges the chase with clamorous Hound and horn.  
 O grant some wardenship of spirits pure  
 As duteous in their office to maintain 250  
 Inviolable for nobler purposes,  
 These individual precincts, to protect  
 Here, if here only, from despoil and wrong  
 All growth of nature and all frame of Art  
 By, and in which the blissful pleasures live. 255  
 Have not th' incumbent Mountains looks of awe  
 In which their mandate may be read, the streams  
 A Voice that pleads, beseeches, and implores ?  
 In vain: the deafness of the world is here  
 Even here, and all too many of the haunts 260  
 Which Fancy most delights in, and the best  
 And dearest resting-places of the heart  
 Vanish beneath an unrelenting doom.

What impulse drove the Hermit to his Cell,  
 And what detain'd him there till life was spent 265  
 Fast anchored in the desert ? Not alone  
 Dread of the persecuting sword, remorse,  
 Wrongs unredress'd, and insults unaveng'd  
 And unavengeable, defeated pride,  
 Prosperity subverted, maddening want, 270  
 Love with despair or grief in agony.  
 Not always from intolerable pangs  
 He fled ; but compassed round by pleasure sighed  
 For independent quiet, craving peace,  
 The central feeling of all happiness, 275  
 Not as a refuge from distress or pain  
 A breathing time, vacation, or a truce,  
 But for its absolute self, a life of peace,  
 Stability without regret or fear,  
 That hath been, is, and shall be evermore. 280  
 Therefore on few external things his heart

Was set, and those his own, or if not his  
 Subsisting under nature's stedfast law.  
 What other yearning was the master tie  
 Of the monastic brotherhood, upon rock 285  
 Aerial or in Green secluded Vale  
 One after one collected from afar  
 An undissolving fellowship ? What but this  
 The universal instinct of repose  
 The longing for confirm'd tranquillity 290  
 In small and great, in humble and sublime,  
 The life where hope and memory are as one,  
 Earth quiet and unchanged, the human soul  
 Consistent in self-rule, and heaven revealed  
 To meditation in that quietness. 295

Thus tempted, thus inspired, St. Basil left  
 (Man as he was of noble blood, high born,  
 High station'd, and elaborately taught)  
 The vain felicities of Athens, left  
 Her throng of Sophists glorying in their snares, 300  
 Her Poets, and conflicting Orators,  
 Abandon'd Alexandria's splendid Halls,  
 Antioch and Cesarea, and withdrew  
 To his delicious Pontic solitude,  
 Remembering with deep thankfulness meanwhile 305  
 Those exhortations of a female voice  
 Pathetically urg'd, his Sister's voice,  
 Macrina, pious Maid, most beautiful  
 And in the gentleness of woman wise,  
 By whom admonish'd, He, while yet a youth 310  
 And a triumphant Scholar, had dismiss'd  
 That loftiness and to the way inclined  
 Of virtue, self restraint and privacy,  
 Virtue severe and absolute Restraint,  
 Which, when he chose, erelong he found the same 315  
 Beyond the utmost of its promise, rich  
 In dignity, sincere content, and joy.

Mark! for the Picture to this hour remains,  
 With what luxuriant fondness he portrays  
 The lineaments and image of that spot 320

312-17 That loftiness and bent his dearest hopes  
 To a strict life of virtuous privacy  
 Which sequestration, when he chose, erelong  
 He found the same beyond all promise rich  
 In dignity *alt.*

In which upon a Mount, sylvan and high,  
 And at the boldest jutting in its side,  
 His cell was fix'd, a Mount with towering Hills  
 Girt round, and vallies intricate and deep,  
 Which, leaving one blind entrance to a plain 325  
 Of fertile meadow-ground that lay beneath  
 Fronting the cell, had from all quarters else  
 Forbidden all approach; by rocks abrupt,  
 Or rampart as effectual of huge woods  
 Neither austere nor gloomy to behold 330  
 But in gay prospect lifting to the Sun  
 Majestic beds of diverse foliage, fruits  
 And thousand laughing blossoms; and the plain  
 Stretched out beneath the high-perch'd cell was bright  
 With herbs and flowers and tufts of flowering plants, 335  
 The choicest which the lavish East pours forth,  
 And sober-headed cypress interspersed,  
 And grac'd with presence of a famous stream  
 The Rapid Iris, journeying from remote  
 Armenian Mountains to his Euxine bourne, 340  
 Sole Traveller by the guarded mount; and He  
 To enter there had leapt with thunderous voice  
 Down a steep rock, and through the secret place,  
 Not without many a lesser bound advanc'd  
 Self-chear'd with song to keep his onward course 345  
 Like a belated Pilgrim.

"Come, O Friend,"

Thus did St. Basil fervently break forth,  
 Thus call upon the man he held most dear:  
 "Come Nazianzen to these fortunate Isles,  
 This blest Arcadia, to these purer fields 350  
 Than those which Pagan superstition feigned  
 For mansions of the happy dead—O come  
 To this Enduring Paradise, these walks  
 Of Contemplation, piety and love,  
 Coverts serene of bless'd mortality. 355  
 What if the Roses and the flowers of Kings,  
 Princes and Emperors, and the crowns and palms  
 Of all the great are blasted, or decay;  
 What if the meanest of their subjects, each  
 Within the narrow region of his cares, 360  
 Tremble beneath a sad uncertainty?

323-6 His cell was fix'd aloft! yet overtopped,  
 Far overtopped by circumambient hills  
 Which, *alt.*

There is a privilege to plead, there is ;  
 Renounce, and thou shalt find that privilege here.  
 No loss lamenting, no privation felt,  
 Disturb'd by no vicissitudes, unscared 365  
 By civil faction, by religious broils  
 Unplagu'd, forgetting and forgotten here'  
 May'st thou possess thy own invisible nest  
 Like one of those small birds that round us chaunt  
 In multitudes ; their warbling will be thine, 370  
 And freedom to unite thy voice with theirs  
 When they at morn or dewy evening praise  
 High heaven in sweet and solemn services.  
 Here may'st thou dedicate thyself to God,  
 And acceptably fill the votive hours 375  
 Not only as these Creatures of the grave  
 That need no rule, and live but to enjoy ;  
 Not only lifted often to the calm  
 Of that entire beatitude in which  
 The Angels serve, but when thou must descend 380  
 From the pure vision, and thy soul admit  
 A salutary glow of hope and fear,  
 Searching in patience and humility  
 Among the written mysteries of faith  
 The will divine ; or when thou would'st assume 385  
 The burthen and the seasonable yoke  
 Befitting our frail nature, would'st be tamed  
 By vigils, abstinence and prayer with tears,  
 What place so fit ?—a deeper solitude  
 Thebais or the Syrian Wilderness 390  
 Contains not in its dry and barren round.  
 For not a human form is seen this way  
 Unless some straggling Hunter led by chance ;  
 Him, if the graver duties be performed,  
 Or overwrought with study if the mind 395  
 Be haunted by a vain disquietude  
 And gladly would be taken from itself ;  
 Or if it be the time when thoughts are blithe,  
 Him may'st thou follow to the hills, or mount  
 Alone, as fancy prompts, equipp'd with bow 400  
 And shafts and quiver, not for perilous aim  
 At the gaunt wolf, the lion or the Pard,—  
 These lurk not in our bounds, but Deer and Goat  
 And other kinds as peaceable are there

- In readiness for inoffensive chase. 405  
 The River also owns his harmless tribes,  
 And tempts thee to like sport; labour itself  
 Is pastime here; for generous is the sun,  
 And cool airs blowing from the mountain top  
 Refresh the brow of him who in plain field 410  
 Or garden presses his industrious spade.  
 Or if a different exercise thou chuse  
 And from boon nature rather would'st receive  
 Food for the day, behold the fruits that hang  
 In the primæval woods; the Wells and Springs 415  
 Have each a living garland of green herbs  
 From which they to the rifling hand will yield  
 Ungrudgingly supply that never fails,  
 Bestowed as freely as their waters pure,  
 To deck thy temperate board."
- From theme to theme 420
- Transported in this sort by fervent zeal  
 That stopp'd not here, the venerable man  
 Holy and great his invitation breathed—  
 And Nazianzen fashion'd a reply  
 Ingenious and rhetorical, with taunts 425  
 Of wit and gay good-humoured ridicule  
 Directed both against the life itself  
 And that strong passion for those fortunate Isles  
 For the Arcadia of a golden dream.  
 But in his inward council-seat, his soul 430  
 Was mov'd, was rapt and fill'd with seriousness,  
 Nor was it long ere broken loose from ties  
 Of the world's business he the call obey'd.  
 And Amphilochius came, and numbers more,  
 Men of all tempers, qualities, estates, 435  
 Came with one spirit, like a troop of fowl  
 That single or in clusters, at a sign  
 Given by their leader, settle on the breast  
 Of some broad pool, green field, or loftiest tree  
 In harmony and undisturbed repose; 440  
 Or as a brood of eager younglings flock  
 Delighted, to the mother's outspread wings  
 And shelter there in unity and love.
- An intellectual Champion of the faith,  
 Accomplish'd above all who then appeared 445  
 Or, haply, since victoriously have stood  
 In opposition to the desperate course  
 Of Pagan rites or impious heresies,

St. Basil, after lapse of years, went forth  
 To a station of authority and power 450  
 Upon an urgent summons, and resigned,  
 Ah! not without regret, the heavenly Mount,  
 The sheltering valley, and his lov'd Compeers.  
 He parted from them, but their common life,  
 If neither first nor singular, at least 455  
 More beautiful than any of like frame  
 That hitherto had been conceived, a life  
 To which by written institutes and rules  
 He gave a solid being, did not fail  
 Nor die with him, and hung through many an age 460  
 In bright remembrance, like a shining cloud  
 O'er the vast regions of the western Church;  
 Whence those communities of holy men,  
 That spread so far, to shrouded quietness  
 Devoted, and of saintly Virgins pure. 465

Fallen in a thousand vales the stately Towers  
 And branching windows gorgeously array'd  
 And aisles and roofs magnificent that thrill'd  
 With halleluiahs, and the strong-ribb'd vaults 470  
 Are crush'd; and buried under weeds and earth  
 The cloistral avenues—they that heard the voice  
 Of Rhone or Loire or some sequester'd brook  
 Soft murmuring among woods and olive bowers  
 And tilth and vineyard, and the Piles that rose  
 On British lawns by Severn, Thames, or Tweed, 475  
 And saw their pomp reflected in the stream,  
 As Tintern saw; and, to this day beholds  
 Her faded image in the depths of Wye;  
 Of solemn port smitten but unsubdued  
 She stands; nor less tenacious of her rights 480  
 Stands Fountains Abbey, glorious in decay,  
 Before the pious Traveller's lifted eye  
 Threatening to outlive the ravages of Time  
 And bear the cross till Christ shall come again.  
 So cleave they to the earth in monument 485  
 Of Revelation, nor in memory less  
 Of nature's pure religion, as in line  
 Uninterrupted it hath travelled down  
 From the first man who heard a howling storm  
 Or knew a troubled thought or vain desire, 490  
 Or in the very sunshine of his joy

Was saddened at a perishable bliss  
 Or languish'd idly under fond regrets  
 That would not be subdued . . . [Methinks I hear,  
 Not from these woods, but from some merry grove 495  
 That lies I know not where, the spritely blast  
 Of the clear bugle, and from thicket green  
 Of hollies sparkling in an April sun  
 Forth, in a moment, issues to the glade  
 A Troop of green-clad Foresters in arms 500  
 Blithe Outlaws with their Chieftain, Would they rouse  
 The Stag, dislodge the Hart; or will they keep  
 Their oath in presence of Maid Marian sworn  
 And with a cloud of shafts this day confound  
 The royal Officers? Let them on, and yield 505  
 Even at their pleasure to the boisterous drift  
 Of pastime or adventure—let them on  
 I love them better when at ease]

“And is thy doom  
 Pronounc'd” (I said, a stripling at that time 510  
 Who with a Fellow-pilgrim had been driv'n  
 Through madding France before a joyous gale  
 And to the solemn haven of Chartreuse  
 Repaired for timely rest) “and are we twain  
 The last, perchance the very last, of men 515  
 Who shall be welcom'd here, whose limbs shall find  
 Repose within these modest cells, whose hearts  
 Receive a comfort from these awful spires?  
 Alas! for what I see, the flash of arms,  
 O Sorrow! and yon military glare; 520  
 And hark, those Voices! let us hide in gloom  
 Profoundest of St. Bruno's wood—these sighs  
 These whispers that pursue or meet me, whence  
 [ ] are they but a common [ ]  
 From the two Sister streams of Life and Death, 525  
 Or are they by the parting Genius sent  
 Unheard till now and to be heard no more”?

Yes, I was moved and to this hour am moved;  
 What Man would bring to nothing if he might  
 A natural power or element? and who, 530  
 If the ability were his, would dare  
 To kill a species of insensate life,  
 Or to the bird of meanest wing would say,  
 Thou and thy kind must perish? Even so

So consecrated, almost, might he deem 535  
 That power, that organ, that transcendent frame  
 Of social being.—“Stay your impious hand”:  
 Such was the vain injunction of that hour  
 By Nature uttered from her Alpine throne:  
 “O leave in quiet this embodied dream 540  
 This substance by which mortal men have clothed,  
 Humanly cloth’d, the ghostliness of things  
 In silence visible and perpetual calm,  
 Let this one Temple last—be this one spot  
 Of Earth devoted to Eternity.”— 545  
 I heard or seemed to hear, and thus the Voice  
 Proceeded: “Honour to the Patriot’s zeal  
 Glory and life to new-born liberty—  
 All hail ye mighty Passions of the Time,  
 The vengeance and the transport and the hope, 550  
 But spare, if past and future be the wings  
 On whose support harmoniously conjoined  
 Moves the great Spirit of human knowledge, spare  
 This House, these courts of mystery, where a step  
 Between the Portals of the shadowy rocks 555  
 Leaves far behind the vanities of life;  
 Where, if a peasant enter or a king,  
 One holy thought, a single holy thought  
 Has power to initiate. Let it be redeem’d  
 With all its blameless priesthood for the sake 560  
 Of Heaven-descended truth; and humbler claim  
 Of these majestic floods, my noblest boast,  
 These shining cliffs, pure as their home, the sky,  
 These forests unapproachable by death  
 That shall endure as long as Man endures 565  
 To think, to hope, to worship and to feel;  
 To struggle,—to be lost within himself  
 In trepidation,—from the dim abyss  
 To look with bodily eyes, and be consoled.”  
 Such repetition of that [ ] 570  
 My thoughts demanded; now an humbler task  
 Awaits us for the unwearied Song will lead  
 Into a lonely Vale the mild abode  
 Of female Votaries—No [ ] plain  
 Blank as the Arabian wilderness defends 575  
 This chosen spot nor is it [ ]  
 By rocks like those of Caucasus or Alps  
 Shapes untransmuted of successive worlds,  
 Nor can it boast a massy structure huge  
 Founded and built by hands with arch and towers, 580

Pillar and pinnacle and glittering spire  
 Sublime as if in Emulation reared  
 Of the eternal Architect—these signs  
 These tokens, admonitions to recall,  
 Curbs to restrain, or stays to lean upon, 585  
 Such food to nourish or appease the Soul  
 The gentle Beings who found harbour here  
 Required not—Them a lowly Edifice  
 Embraced by [ ? ] grounds that did not aim  
 To overshadow but to screen and hide, 590  
 Contented ; and an unassuming brook  
 Working between these hills its careless way  
 Through meadow, chestnut woods and olive-bowers  
 And tilth and vineyard  
*cetera desunt*

## ADDENDUM

*Fragment of an intended poem on Milton, written in the copy of  
 Paradise Lost which belonged to Wordsworth at Cambridge*

ON Religion's holy hill  
 He built an altar, and the fire from heaven  
 Came down upon it. Round the growing flames  
 That filled the sense with fragrance gently rose  
 Sounds and [ <sup>1</sup> ] and all the while were heard  
 Airs of high melody from solemn harp,  
 And voice of Angel in accordance sweet.  
 Anon the trump of God, with dreadful blast  
 Rock'd all the mountain ; on their flashing clouds  
 The silent cherubs trembled ; undismayed  
 Stood the blind prophet and *cetera desunt*

<sup>1</sup> left blank

## NOTES

p. 1. *Preface to the Edition of 1814:*

### *The Recluse and the genesis of The Excursion*

"Several years ago, when the Author retired to his native mountains, with the hope of being enabled to construct a literary Work that might live, it was a reasonable thing that he should take a review of his own mind, and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. As subsidiary to this preparation he undertook to record, in verse, the origin and progress of his own powers. That Work, addressed to a dear Friend, most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, . . . has been long finished;<sup>1</sup> and the result of the investigation which gave rise to it was a determination to compose a philosophical poem, containing views of Man, Nature, and Society; and to be entitled *The Recluse*. . ."

This paragraph gives an account of the genesis of *The Recluse*, *The Excursion* "being a portion of *The Recluse*",<sup>2</sup> and of *The Prelude*, which is not strictly accurate. Wordsworth did not retire to Grasmere till December 1799. The scheme for the great philosophical poem to be called "The Recluse" was embraced early in 1798 at Alfoxden, Somerset (v. Letters of Wordsworth written March 1798, *E.L.*, pp. 188-90). The relation between *The Prelude*, *The Excursion*, and *The Recluse* is somewhat obscured by the fact that W. first used *The Recluse* as a covering title for all the blank verse which he was writing in the early years with a view to the great philosophical poem. Some of this verse was incorporated in *The Prelude*, his poetical autobiography (completed in its first form in 1805) some in *The Excursion*. As this preface shows, he conceived *The Prelude* as subsidiary and preparatory to *The Recluse*; and he now, in 1814, planned *The Recluse* as a tripartite poem, of which he had written Book I of Part I (v. Appendix A) and of which *The Excursion* was to form Part II.

From his letters and MS. note-books, and from Dorothy Wordsworth's journals and letters, the emergence of *The Excursion* from the original plan of *The Recluse* can be traced.

March 6, 1798. "I have written 1300 lines of a poem in which I contrive to convey most of the knowledge of which I am possessed. My object is to give pictures of Nature, Man and Society. Indeed I know not anything which will not come within the scope of my plan" (W. W. to James Tobin: *E.L.*, p. 188).

March 11. "I have written 1300 lines of a poem which I hope to make of considerable utility. Its title will be *The Recluse; or, views of Nature, Man, and Society*" (W. W. to James Losh: *E.L.*, p. 190).

<sup>1</sup> *The Prelude*, published 1850.

<sup>2</sup> Thus it is described on the title-page of 1814.

A first draft of the lines "On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life" afterwards printed as Prospectus to *The Excursion* was probably written at this time. The resolve to compose his autobiography rather than embark straightway upon the great poem was perhaps formed in the winter of 1798-9.

Coleridge was the prime mover in the scheme for the great philosophic poem. "I looked forward to 'The Recluse' as the first and only true philosophical poem in existence" (letter of S. T. C. to W. W., May 30, 1815). Wordsworth kept the task before him for many years, finding himself increasingly reluctant for it, and at first turning to Coleridge for stimulus and assistance.

March 6, 1804. "I am very anxious to have your notes for *The Recluse*. I cannot say how much importance I attach to this: if it should please God that I survive you, I should reproach myself for ever in writing the work if I had neglected to procure this help" (W. W. to S. T. C.<sup>1</sup> *E.L.*, p. 368).

Coleridge's comment on *The Excursion*, recorded in his *Table Talk*, July 31, 1832, reveals the original design of *The Recluse*:

"I cannot help regretting that Wordsworth did not first publish his thirteen books on the growth of an individual mind—superior, as I used to think, upon the whole, to *The Excursion*. You may judge how I felt about them by my own poem upon the occasion. Then the plan laid out, and, I believe, partly suggested by me, was, that Wordsworth should assume the station of a man in mental repose, one whose principles were made up, and so prepared to deliver upon authority a system of philosophy. He was to treat man as man—a subject of eye, ear, touch, and taste, in contact with external nature, and informing the senses from the mind, and not compounding a mind out of the senses; then he was to describe the pastoral and other states of society, assuming something of the Juvenalian spirit as he approached the high civilization of cities and towns, and opening a melancholy picture of the present state of degeneracy and vice; thence he was to infer and reveal the proof of, and necessity for, the whole state of man and society being subject to, and illustrative of, a redemptive process in operation, showing how this idea reconciled all the anomalies, and promised future glory and restoration. Something of this sort was, I think, agreed on. It is, in substance, what I have been all my life doing in my system of philosophy.

"I think Wordsworth possessed more of the genius of a great philosophic poet than any man I ever knew, or, as I believe, has existed in England since Milton; but it seems to me that he ought never to have abandoned the contemplative position, which is peculiarly—

<sup>1</sup> W. never received the notes. From a letter of S. T. C. to W. W. of May 1, 1805, D. W. transcribes the following: "my Ideas respecting *The Recluse* were burnt as a Plague-garment, and all my long letters to you and Sir George Beaumont sunk to the bottom of the Sea!" *E.L.*, p. 508.

perhaps I might say exclusively—fitted for him. His proper title is *Spectator ab extra*.”

March 6, 1804. “I am now writing a poem on my own earlier life. This Poem will not be published . . . till I have finished a larger and more important work to which it is tributary. Of this larger work I have written one Book and several scattered fragments, it is a moral and philosophical Poem; the subject whatever I find most interesting in Nature, Man and Society. . . . To this work I mean to devote the prime of my life and the chief force of my mind. I have also arranged the plan of a narrative Poem; and if I live to finish these three principal works I shall be content. . . . They are all to be in blank verse.” (W. W. to De Quincey: *E.L.*, p. 370.)

But to take up his station “as a man in mental repose”, and “deliver upon authority a system of philosophy” according to Coleridge’s plan, was what Wordsworth found he could not do. The “one book” which he told De Quincey he had written was entitled *The Recluse*, Part First, Book First, *Home at Grasmere*.<sup>1</sup> Composed early in 1800 it ends with the eloquent passage already referred to, “On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life”, which he was to quote in his Preface to *The Excursion* as “a kind of Prospectus of the design and scope of the whole Poem” (*The Recluse*), but the substance of the Book, well described in its title *Home at Grasmere*, is an intimate record of his impressions of the Vale and its inhabitants during his first months of residence at Dove Cottage: it is in fact a continuation of his poetical autobiography from the place where *The Prelude* leaves off. *The Excursion*, which he published with the sub-title “a Portion of *The Recluse*”, took the poetic form of philosophic dialogue on a slender dramatic basis, interlarded with narrative: it had its starting-point not in Coleridge’s conception of the philosophical poem but in a tale in blank verse, *The Ruined Cottage*, written at Racedown before Wordsworth’s intimacy with Coleridge began.

June 1797. “The first thing that was read after he (Coleridge) came was W.’s new poem *The Ruined Cottage*, with which he was much delighted” (D. W. to M. H. (?): *E.L.*, p. 169).

Though no complete MS. survives of the earliest draft of *The Ruined Cottage*, it must have contained a short bare narrative of unrelieved distress. The earliest MS. of portions of it (MS. A) seems to have been written in 1795 (*v. infra*). In a letter to J. P. Estlin in June 1797<sup>2</sup> Coleridge quotes the last lines of it, ending “Last human tenant of these ruined walls”<sup>3</sup> (corresponding with MS. B *infra*, ll. 705–42, and *Exc.* i. 871–916). Its theme was expressly the Ruined Cottage, found by the poet in his wanderings and haunting him by

<sup>1</sup> *The Recluse*. *Home at Grasmere*. First published in 1888. *I*vide Appendix A, p. 313 *supra*, and note, p. 475.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters of S. T. C.*, edited E. H. C., vol. i, p. 244.

<sup>3</sup> In the two earliest complete MSS. B and D the poem ends at this line.

the human appeal of its abandoned walls and garden, and its disused well:<sup>1</sup> and the poem must have told how on one of his visits to the place he met by chance a Pedlar, who, when questioned, told him the story of the "last human tenant of the ruined walls". In the following March D. W. writes to Mary Hutchinson:

March 5, 1798. "You desire me to send you a copy of *The Ruined Cottage*. This is impossible for it has grown to the length of 900 lines.<sup>2</sup> I will however send you a copy of that part which is immediately and solely connected with the Cottage. The Pedlar's character now makes a very, certainly the *most*, considerable part of the Poem."

By April 1798, as we know from a letter of Coleridge written in that month<sup>3</sup> the philosophical tail-piece had been added (*v. Addendum to MS. B infra*). The character of the philosophic Pedlar and his relation with the young Poet, his interlocutor, were evidently a new feature: in the version of the closing lines quoted by Coleridge in June 1797 the interlocutor had been addressed by the narrator of the tale as "Stranger"; he has become "my friend" in the later version (MS. B 740 (*v. infra*, p. 379); *Exc.* i. 914).

From Dec. 1801 to March 1802 there are many references in Dorothy Wordsworth's journal to *The Pedlar* as the expanded story is now entitled, and she speaks of it as a poem in three parts. It covered roughly the ground of *Exc.* Book I, divided, as it still is, into three parts at l. 433 and l. 604.

On Oct. 9, 1800, Coleridge had written to Sir H. Davy: "We mean to publish *Christabel* with a long blank verse poem of W's entitled *The Pedlar*"; and on March 10, 1802, Dorothy Wordsworth writes in her journal: "W. has been talking about publishing the Yorkshire Wolds poem (i.e. *Peter Bell*) with *The Pedlar*."<sup>4</sup> At what date precisely Wordsworth ceased to regard *The Pedlar* as a separate poem and began to plan *The Excursion* as a development of it is not revealed; but it is evident that he found in the philosophic pedlar, later to be called the Wanderer, whose character took on a special significance for him, an effective starting-point for this portion of his great philosophical poem, and by the end of 1804 he is writing of *The Pedlar* as a part of *The Recluse*.

Dec. 25, 1804. "I do not know if you are exactly acquainted with the plan of my poetical labour: it is twofold; first, a Poem, to be called *The Recluse*, in which it will be my object to express in verse my most interesting feelings concerning Man, Nature, and society; and next, a Poem (in which I am at present principally engaged) on my earlier life. . . . This latter work I expect to have finished before the month

<sup>1</sup> *v.* the first fragmentary MS., A, described *infra* p. 377.

<sup>2</sup> This revised form of the poem has survived in MS. B.

<sup>3</sup> *Unpublished Letters of S. T. C.*, edited Griggs, i. 76.

<sup>4</sup> *v.* also D. W.'s journal for Feb. 13 where *The Pedlar* and *The Recluse* are referred to as two poems.

of May; and then I purpose to fall with all my might on the former, which is the chief object upon which my thoughts have been fixed these many years. Of this poem, that of "The Pedlar", which Coleridge read you, is part, and I may have written of it altogether about 2,000 lines. It will consist I hope of almost 10, or 12 thousand." (W. to Sir G. Beaumont.)

June 3, 1805. "I have the pleasure to say that I finished my poem [The Prelude] about a fortnight ago. . . . This work may be considered as a sort of *portico* to *The Recluse*, part of the same building, which I hope to be able, ere long, to begin with in earnest." (W. to Sir G. B.)

He was to make the composition of *The Excursion* his principal work for the next nine years: it was published under the title of *The Excursion, Being a Portion of The Recluse* in 1814. His unfulfilled promise of *The Recluse* lay on his conscience and engaged the hopes of his friends for the rest of his life.\* Twice he had turned aside from

\* Nov. 10, 1806. I am going to Press with a volume . . . it will consist entirely of small pieces, and I publish with great reluctance; but the day when my long work will be finished seems farther and farther off. (W. W. to Walter Scott.)

Feb. 18, 1815. W. has had one of his weeks of rest and we now begin to wish that he was at work again, but as he intends completely to plan the first part of *The Recluse* before he begins the composition, he must read many Books before he will fairly set to labour again. (D. W. to S. H.)

Oct. 16, 1817. . . . he intends to work hard at *The Recluse* in Winter. (D. W. to C. Clarkson.)

June 7, 1819. If, as you say, The Waggoner in some sort came at my call, Oh for a potent voice to call forth *The Recluse* from his profound dormitory, where he sleeps forgetful of his foolish charge—the world! (C. Lamb to W. W.)

March 27, 1821. W. is quite well, and very busy, though he has not looked at *The Recluse* or the poem on his own life; and this disturbs us. After 50 years of age there is no time to spare, and unfinished works should not if possible be left behind. This he feels, but the will never governs his labours. (D. W. to C. Clarkson.)

April 20, 1822. *The Recluse* has had a long sleep, save in my thoughts; my MSS. are so ill-penned and blurred that they are useless to all but myself; and at present I cannot face them. (W. W. to W. S. Landor.)

Dec. 13, 1824. My Brother has not yet looked at *The Recluse*; he seems to feel the task so weighty that he shrinks from beginning with it . . . yet knows that he has now no time to loiter if another great work is to be accomplished by him—I say another—for I consider *The Excursion* as one work though the Title-page tells that it is but a *part* of one that has another Title. (D. W. to H. C. R.)

1826. I hope we shall have the remainder of *The Recluse* ere long. (Hartley Coleridge to Derwent.)

Dec. 18, 1826. He has lately written some very good sonnets. I wish I could add that *The Recluse* was brought from his hiding-place. (D. W. to H. C. R.)

Jan. 22, 1830. For your head (I do not flatter) is not a nob or the end of

his central task. Of the great philosophical poem on Coleridge's plan, to which he still endeavoured to be faithful (he says in the Preface to *The Excursion* that "the first and third parts of *The Recluse* will consist chiefly of meditations in the Author's own person"), all that finally survived, apart from one Book, was a Prelude to the main theme and an Excursion from it. It is clear from the letters and the MSS. that there was from the start a divergence between Wordsworth's own idea of *The Recluse* and Coleridge's plan. Coleridge intended a philosophical discourse delivered authoritatively from the mouth of the poet. Wordsworth early defined his object as "to give *pictures* of Nature, Man, and Society", and the early note-books of the Alfoxden period, 1797-8, show that the "scattered fragments" of which he speaks later were jottings in blank verse falling into three categories: (1) descriptions of natural scenes and images that impressed him, (2) human tales and character sketches, and (3) philosophical reflections rising out of both. Wordsworth was right to follow his own bent: his poetic thought sprang out of the living body of his experience, and could only be delivered through images and incidents and characters

a ninepin—unless a Vulcanian hammer could fairly batter a Recluse out of it, then would I bid the smirch'd God knock and knock lustily, the two-handed skinker. (Lamb to W. W.)

Aug. 1830. I am afraid there is little hope at present of another portion of *The Recluse*. (Hartley Coleridge to Derwent.)

Sept. 28, 1836. We hope . . . that the Poet may leave home with a perfect holiday before him—and, but I dare not say so—return to *The Recluse*; and let me charge you, not to encourage the Muse to *vagrant* subjects. (M. W. to H. C. R.)

Dec. 17, 1836. Oh! continue *The Recluse*. I wish I was Moxon. I would make you such an offer for it as could ruin me and enrich my children. . . . I really think from what Murray said to me, two or three years ago, he would give you £1,000 for the rest of *The Recluse*. (Barron Field to W. W., unpublished letter.)

[It is noteworthy that in correcting his last fair copy of *The Prelude* (MS. E) in 1839 (or possibly a little later), he omitted the line which concludes a tentative passage on the senses counteracting each other: *But this is matter for another Song* (Prel. 1805, xi. 185). Clearly he had still contemplated up to that time working out some of these ideas in *The Recluse*.]

June 25, 1841. He [Wordsworth] says that the "Recluse" has never been written except a few passages—and probably never will. (Aubrey de Vere to his sister.)

Jan. 12, 1843. . . . if I could hope to see the conclusion of *The Excursion* it would be worth living for—I am sure I should live longer if I could only have the hope of seeing a portion of it. . . . (C. Clarkson to H. C. R.)

Feb. 16, 1845. I am sorry to see him [the poet] entering into politics or political economy. . . . He does not shine in such subjects. . . . I wish he could either complete *The Recluse* or lock up his desk. (Barron Field to H. C. R.)

which belonged to the life of Man and Nature as he knew it; the autobiographic form of *The Prelude* and, in a less degree, the dramatic and narrative form of *The Excursion* fitted his genius.

*Chronology of the Composition of The Excursion*

The chronology of the composition of *The Excursion* can be traced in outline from a study of the MSS. and letters and other evidence. It is clear that W.'s habit was to compose in detached passages, which he afterwards worked into the fabric of his poem. Certain passages of *The Excursion* were written in the early years when he was contemplating *The Recluse*, and had started upon *The Prelude*, and before he had set to work upon *The Excursion* as a separate publication. I append a list with approximate dates:

1795. W. says that the lines first written were "those beginning 'Nine tedious years' and ending 'Last human tenant of these ruined walls' [*Exc.* i. 871-916]. These were composed in '95 at Racedown".—I. F. But MS. A of *The Ruined Cottage*, which must belong to 1795 *circa*, has the central part of Margaret's story, the unhappy events leading to her husband's breakdown, MS. B, 348-413 and 430-9 (*v.* pp. 389-92 *infra*), *Exc.* i. 502-70, 582-91.

1797. In June 1797 S. T. C. quotes *Exc.* i. 871-916 in a letter.

1797-8. Passages describing "Margaret during her affliction" (*v.* I. F.). W. places next in date, as composed at Racedown or Alfoxden, lines at the close of Book IV "For the man who in this spirit . . . intellectual soul" [*Exc.* iv. 1207-74]—I. F. This passage appears first in Addendum to MS. B, 3-58, 92-9 (*v.* pp. 400-3 *infra*), and is quoted by S. T. C. in a letter of April 1798. In MS. B the passage included *Exc.* iv. 958-68.

MS. B and B 2 of *The Ruined Cottage* (*v.* *infra*) belong to the winter 1797-8. In the *Alfoxden* note-book which W. used between Jan. 20 and March 5, 1798, there are jottings for the pedlar's character (*v.* note to *Exc.* i. 422-33) and for "Objects that have no power to hold articulate language", *Exc.* iv. 1204-7 (*v.* note).

1798-9. In the *Christabel* note-book lines corresponding to *Exc.* iii. 69-73 (*v.* Appendix B, iv. i *supra*, p. 342) probably belong to late Spring 1798. MS. 18<sup>a</sup> contains a fragment about the factory lad corresponding to *Exc.* viii. 292-305, 315-33 (*v.* *app. crit.* and note) and a fragment "There is an active principle . . ." corresponding to *Exc.* ix. 1-26, 124-52 (*v.* *app. crit.* and note).

The lines used as Prospectus to *Exc.*, "On Man, on Nature, and on human life . . .", were probably written in 1798.

1799-1800. MS. 2 of *Peter Bell* has lines describing Margaret of R. C. (*Exc.* i. 513), including some hitherto unpublished (*v.* note pp. 413-14. *infra*).

1800. MS. R, which comprises rough drafts for *Recluse* i, written early in 1800, includes "Happy is he who lives . . ." (*Exc.* iv. 332-72) and the two stories introduced in *Exc.* vi. 1080-187, those of W. Armathwaite (complete), and the widowed family from l. 1149.

1804 (or earlier). MS. Y, containing chiefly passages for *Prel.*, has (a) *Exc.* ii. 1-26 originally written as opening of *Prel.* viii (v. *Prel.*, E. de S., p. xxxviii); (b) deleted passage written for *Prel.* viii. 496 *et seq.* (v. *Prel.*, E. de S., p. 562), incident of solitary lamb, *Exc.* iv. 402-12; (c) description of snow-white ram reflected in pool, *Exc.* ix. 437-48 (v. note *infra*); (d) first draft of "We live by admiration hope and love", *Exc.* iv. 763 *et seq.* (v. note *infra*); (e) lines about the Indian looking out from an eminence, *Exc.* iii. 928-40 (v. note *infra*).

When in 1804 W. began to shape in his mind the section of *The Recluse* which was in the issue to be published as *The Excursion*, he had decided to use *The Pedlar* as his starting-point; v. his letter to Sir G. Beaumont of Dec. 25, 1804: "Of this poem [*The Recluse*] that of the Pedlar is part, and I may have written of it altogether about 2,000 lines." These 2,000 lines would be accounted for by *The Ruined Cottage*, just under 1,000, and the first book of *The Recluse* (v. Appendix A), a little over 1,000 (the last line of *Recl.* MS. B is numbered 1047; v. p. 476 *infra*).

In June 1805 *The Prelude* was finished, but he was slow to get under way with *The Recluse*, and did not get to work in earnest upon it till the summer of 1806, as the following evidence from letters shows:

- (1) Aug. 7, 1805. "My Brother has not resumed his great work since the finishing of the poem on his own life, and he now begins to be anxious to get forward again." (D. W. to Lady Beaumont.)
- (2) Dec. 25, 1805. ". . . He is very anxious to get forward with *The Recluse* and is reading for the nourishment of his mind, preparatory to beginning." (D. W. to Lady Beaumont.)
- (3) Jan. 19, 1806. "My Brother, though not actually employed in his great work, is not idle, for he almost daily produces something, and his thoughts are employed upon *The Recluse*." (D. W. to Lady Beaumont.)
- (4) July 23, 1806. "Wm. goes on rapidly with *The Recluse*." (D. W. to C. Clarkson.)
- (5) Aug. 1, 1806. "Within this last month I have returned to *The Recluse* and have written 700 additional lines." (W. W. to Sir G. Beaumont.)
- (6) Sept. 8, 1806. "I have been busily employed lately; I wrote one book of *The Recluse* nearly 1,000 lines, then had a rest, last week began again, and have written 300 more: I hope all tolerably well, and certainly with good views." (W. W. to Sir G. Beaumont; v. *M.Y.*, p. 62.)

It is not clear whether the 700 lines mentioned in (5) are to be included in the 1,000 mentioned in (6). I incline to think, after long study of the MSS., that they are additional to the 1,000. The precise reference to "one book", and the 300 more lines written in the first week of September (6), would fit very closely the first constructive draft of Book II and the lines 1-324 of Book III of which there is a consecutive fair copy in MS. P.(v. *infra*, p. 410), followed by a more or less rough draft of the rest of Book III. What, then, would the 700 additional lines of (5) represent? I believe these would be the rough drafts of passages of Book IV found in MS. 58, a small notebook similar in form to MS. X and MS. Y of *The Prelude* (v. *Prel.*, E. de S., pp. xxiii and xxiv). It is mainly occupied with these rough drafts, in separate groups, of lines afterwards incorporated in Book IV, but pages near the beginning contain drafts of v. 1-225, and at the end drafts of ii. 152-320, in a version earlier than MS. P. These have clearly been written in *after* the passages of Book IV. We may suppose then that W. was occupied in July, and earlier, with the planning of Books II, III, and IV and had written, in the rough, a good deal of these three books; and further that in August and September he wrote a first constructive draft of Book II and the first 300 lines of Book III.

After this bout of work he seems to have done very little to *The Excursion* for the next three years. He was diverted from it by many distractions: Coleridge's return and the anxieties consequent upon it; the removal to Coleorton (Nov. 1806); the preparation for press of the volumes of 1807 and the composition of some of their contents, including *Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle*; the return to Grasmere (June 1807); the composition of *The White Doe of Rylstone* (winter 1807-8); a visit to London (March 1808); the removal to Allan Bank (June 1808); his excited interest in the Spanish War and his composition of his pamphlet on the Convention of Cintra (winter of 1808); his translation of epitaphs of Chiabrera, and the writing of two essays for *The Friend* (1809-10). But on Feb. 28, 1810, D. W. wrote to Lady Beaumont: "He is deeply engaged in composition. Before he turns to any other labour I hope he will have finished three books of *The Recluse*. He seldom writes less than 50 lines a day." In the same letter she writes: "The essay [on Epitaphs in *The Friend*] of this week is by my brother . . . he has written two more essays on the same subject which will appear when there is need." The subject-matter of Books V, VI, and VII of *The Excursion*, the "authentic epitaphs" (v. 651), given by the Pastor of some of his parishioners, is clearly related to W.'s broodings over the general subject of Epitaphs, and it is significant that he appended his first essay on Epitaphs as a note to Book V, and that in his third essay (publ. by Grosart, 1876) he quotes the Pastor's account of the Deaf Man (v. note to vii. 395).

His second bout of constructive work dates then from the winter

of 1809–1810, and was continued through 1811–13. The final pulling together and revision was going on early in 1814 (v. D. W.'s letter to C. Clarkson, April 24, 1814; *M.Y.*, p. 590). Conjectural chronology of the separate books is given in the introductory notes to these, *infra*.

Apart from the labour he devoted to composition, shown in draft after draft of particular passages in the MSS., he spent much pains throughout his life in revising the printed text of *The Excursion*. The more important revisions were made in the editions of 1827, 1837, and 1845. On Oct. 24, 1828, he wrote to Barron Field: "I am much pleased that you think the alterations of *The Excursion* improvements. My sister thinks them so invariably" (*L.Y.*, p. 313). For his alterations for ed. 1845 v. notes to I. 51, 792 and 934–55, *infra*.

p. 3. *Prospectus*: On Man, on Nature, and on Human Life, etc.] Of the *Prospectus* there are three extant MSS. MS. 1 is found, as an independent fragment, in a small note-book, with thin blue card-board cover, similar to those used for drafts of *The Prelude*. This note-book was used in 1808 for accounts of the money expended on the Green Family (v. *George and Sarah Green*, by D. W., Oxford, 1936, p. 11). The date of the MS. is uncertain, but it represents an earlier stage of the text than MS. 2, and thus was probably written before the rest of *The Recluse* Book I. It is quite likely that it is a fair copy of a draft of lines written as early as 1798, at Alfoxden.

MS. 2 is found in MS. B of *The Recluse*, of which it forms the conclusion (v. Appendix A, p. 338, where this version is given in full). It probably dates from the early months of 1800. MS. 3, only fragmentary, is preserved on a loose sheet, on the back of which is a quotation from Milton and the motto of *The Prioress's Tale* (probably added later). Those lines which it contains are very nearly identical with MS. 2, with which it is probably contemporary.

13. numerous verse] *Paradise Lost*, v. 150.

23. "fit audience let me find though few!"] from Milton's address to Urania, *P.L.* vii. 30–1:

still govern thou my Song  
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.

34. empyreal thrones] *P.L.* ii. 43: "O progeny of Heaven, empyreal thrones."

79. cf. *P.L.* viii. 241:

fast shut  
The dismal Gates, and barricado'd strong.

83–5. Descend, prophetic Spirit . . . things to come]:

"Not my own fears, nor the prophetic Soul

Of the wide world dreaming on things to come." Shakespeare's  
*Sonnets*.—W.

90–3. Shedding benignant influence . . . sphere] Cf. Milton, *P.L.* vii. 375:

the Pleiades before him danc'd

Shedding sweet influence.

The rest of the passage is reminiscent of *P.L.* x. 660-2.

### THE EXCURSION

"Something must now be said of this poem, but chiefly, as has been done through the whole of these notes, with reference to my personal friends, and especially to her who has perseveringly taken them down from my dictation. Towards the close of the first book stand the lines that were first written, beginning, "Nine tedious years," and ending, "Last human tenant of these ruined walls." These were composed in '95 at Racedown; and for several passages describing the employment and demeanour of Margaret during her affliction, I was indebted to observations made in Dorsetshire, and afterwards at Alfoxden in Somersetshire, where I resided in '97 and '98. The lines towards the conclusion of the fourth book, "Despondency corrected", beginning, "For the man who in this spirit," to the words "intellectual soul"—were in order of time composed the next, either at Racedown or Alfoxden, I do not remember which. The rest of the Poem was written in the vale of Grasmere, chiefly during our residence at Allan Bank. The long Poem on my own education was, together with many minor Poems, composed while we lived at the cottage at Town End. Perhaps my purpose of giving an additional interest to these my Poems in the eyes of my nearest and dearest Friends may be promoted by saying a few words upon the character of the Wanderer, the Solitary, and the Pastor, and some other of the persons introduced—and first, of the principal one, the Wanderer. My lamented friend Southey (for this is written a month after his decease) used to say that had he been born a papist, the course of life which would in all probability have been his was the one for which he was most fitted and most to his mind, that of a Benedictine Monk in a convent, furnished, as many once were and some still are, with an inexhaustible Library. *Books*, as appears from many passages in his writings, and as was evident to those who had opportunities of observing his daily life, were in fact *his passion*; and *wandering*, I can with truth affirm, was *mine*; but this propensity in me was happily counteracted by inability from want of fortune to fulfil my wishes. But, had I been born in a class which would have deprived me of what is called a liberal education, it is not unlikely that, being strong in body, I should have taken to a way of life such as that in which my Pedlar passed the greater part of his days. At all events, I am here called upon freely to acknowledge that the character I have represented in his person is chiefly an idea of what I fancied my own character might have become in his circumstances. Nevertheless, much of what he says and does had an external existence that fell under my own youthful and subsequent observation. An individual

named Patrick, by birth and education a Scotchman, followed this humble occupation for many years, and afterwards settled in the Town of Kendal. He married a kinswoman of my wife's, and her sister Sarah was brought up from early childhood under this good man's eye.<sup>1</sup> My own imaginations I was happy to find clothed in reality, and fresh ones suggested, by what she reported of this man's tenderness of heart, his strong and pure imagination, and his solid attainments in literature, chiefly religious whether in prose or verse. At Hawkshead also, while I was a schoolboy, there occasionally resided a Packman (the name then generally given to [persons of] this calling) with whom I had frequent conversations upon what had befallen him, and what he had observed, during his wandering life; and, as was natural, we took much to each other: and, upon the subject of *Pedlarism* in general, as *then* followed, and its favourableness to an intimate knowledge of human concerns, not merely among the humbler classes of society, I need say nothing here in addition to what is to be found in *The Excursion*, and a note attached to it.

"Now for the Solitary. Of him I have much less to say. Not long after we took up our abode at Grasmere, came to reside there, from what motive I either never knew or have forgotten, a Scotchman a little past the middle of life, who had for many years been Chaplain to a Highland regiment. He was in no respect as far as I know, an interesting character, though in his appearance there was a good deal that attracted attention, as if he had been shattered in fortune and not happy in mind. Of his quondam position I availed myself, to connect with the Wanderer, also a Scotchman, a character suitable to my purpose, the elements of which I drew from several persons with whom I had been connected, and who fell under my observation during frequent residences in London at the beginning of the French Revolution. The chief of these was, one may *now* say, a Mr. Fawcett, a preacher at a dissenting meeting-house at the Old Jewry. It happened to me several times to be one of his congregation through my connection with Mr. Nicholson of Cateaton Street, Strand, who at a time, when I had not many acquaintances in London, used often to

<sup>1</sup> eye *corr.* in pencil by M. W. to read with the note "Sarah went to Kendal on our Mother's death, but Mr. P. died in the course of a year or two.—M. W." In notes about the family made by M. W. for her son William she writes of "James Patrick of Kendal, the intellectual Pedlar, whose character suggested to your Father that of the Wanderer in the 1st Book of the *Excursion*—the details of which he gathered from conversations with your Aunt Sarah, who was taken by her sister's godmother (Mrs. Patrick) from her home upon the death of our Mother, when she was 8 years old—she went to School in Kendal, but the most important part of her education was gathered from the stores of that good man's mind". G. G. W. notes, "Mrs. Hutchinson died March 31, 1783." James Patrick died March 27, 1787, aged 71 years.

invite me to dine with him on Sundays ; and I took that opportunity (Mr. N. being a Dissenter) of going to hear Fawcett, who was an able and eloquent man. He published a Poem on War, which had a good deal of merit, and made me think more about him than I should otherwise have done. But his Christianity was probably never very deeply rooted ; and, like many others in those times of like shewy talents, he had not strength of character to withstand the effects of the French Revolution, and of the wild and lax opinions which had done so much towards producing it, and far more in carrying it forward in its extremes. Poor Fawcett, I have been told, became pretty much such a person as I have described ; and early disappeared from the stage, having fallen into habits of intemperance, which I have heard (though I will not answer for the fact) hastened his death. Of him I need say no more : there were many like him at that time, which the world will never be without, but which were more numerous then for reasons too obvious to be dwelt upon.

*"The Pastor.* To what is said of the Pastor in the Poem I have little to add but what may be deemed superfluous. It has ever appeared to me highly favourable to the beneficial influence of the Church of England upon all gradations and classes of society, that the patronage of its benefices is in numerous instances attached to the estates of noble families of ancient gentry ; and accordingly I am gratified by the opportunity afforded me in *The Excursion*, to portray the character of a country clergyman of more than ordinary talents, born and bred in the upper ranks of society so as to partake of their refinements, and at the same time brought by his pastoral office and his love of rural life into intimate connection with the peasantry of his native district. To illustrate the relation which in my mind this Pastor bore to the Wanderer, and the resemblance between them, or rather the points of community in their nature, I likened one to an oak and the other to a sycamore ; and, having here referred to this comparison, I need only add, I had no one individual in my mind, wishing rather to embody this idea than to break in upon the simplicity of it, by traits of individual character or of any peculiarity of opinion.

"And now for a few words upon the scene where these interviews and conversations are supposed to occur. The scene of the first book of the Poem is, I must own, laid in a tract of country not sufficiently near to that which soon comes into view in the second book, to agree with the fact. All that relates to Margaret and the ruined cottage etc., was taken from observations made in the South-West of England, and certainly it would require more than seven-league boots to stretch in one morning from a common in Somersetshire or Dorsetshire to the heights of Furness Fells and the deep valleys they embosom. For thus dealing with space I need make, I trust, no apology, but my friends may be amused by the truth.

"In the Poem, I suppose that the Pedlar and I ascended from a

plain country up the vale of Langdale, and struck off a good way above the chapel to the western side of the vale. We ascended the hill and thence looked down upon the circular recess in which lies Blea Tarn, chosen by the Solitary for his retreat. After we quit his cottage, passing over a low ridge we descend into another vale, that of Little Langdale, towards the head of which stands, embowered or partly shaded by yews and other trees, something between a cottage and a mansion or gentleman's house such as they once were in this country. This I convert into the Parsonage, and at the same time and as by the waving of a magic wand, I turn the comparatively confined vale of Langdale, its Tarn, and the rude Chapel which once adorned the valley, into the stately and comparatively spacious vale of Grasmere, its Lake, and its ancient Parish Church; and upon the side of Loughrigg Fell, at the foot of the Lake, and looking down upon it and the whole vale and its encompassing mountains, the Pastor is supposed by me to stand, when at sunset he addresses his companions in words which I hope my readers will remember, or I should not have taken the trouble of giving so much in detail the materials on which my mind actually worked.

"Now for a few particulars of *fact* respecting the persons whose stories are told or characters are described by the different speakers. To Margaret I have already alluded. I will add here, that the lines beginning, 'She was a woman of a steady mind . . . live on earth a life of happiness', faithfully delineate, as far as they go, the character possessed in common by many women whom it has been my happiness to know in humble life; and that several of the most touching things which she is represented as saying and doing are taken from actual observation of the distresses and trials under which different persons were suffering, some of them strangers to me, and others daily under my notice. I was born too late to have a distinct remembrance of the origin of the American war, but the state in which I represent Robert's mind to be I had frequent opportunities of observing at the commencement of our rupture with France in '93, opportunities of which I availed myself in the story of the Female Vagrant, as told in the poem on Guilt and Sorrow."—I. F. (*The rest of the I. F. note is given in the appropriate places in the notes that follow.*)

## BOOK I

This book was completed in its first form as an independent poem entitled *The Ruined Cottage* in the spring of 1798. This poem had been read to Coleridge in a shorter form in June 1797, but some portions of it had been written as early as 1795: v. I. F. note to *The Excursion*, in which W. says that ll. 871–916 of Book I were the first written of the whole poem, and were composed at Racedown. From a study of the extant MSS. to which I refer as A, B, B<sup>a</sup>, D, E, M, and P, it is possible to trace the stages of its development. In addition to

these MSS., drafts of isolated passages occur in the *Alfoxden* and *Christabel* note-books to which I have already referred (v. p. 369 *supra*).

MS. A is a folio sheet with watermark 1795, inscribed in W. W.'s hand. It contains fragmentary drafts of passages closely corresponding to the following lines of MS. B, 348-413, v. p. 389-92 *infra*, connected by the words "for half a day He then would leave" with ll. 430-9 (*Exc.* i. 502-70, 582-91); and also passages describing the ruined cottage, which add to the picture given in MS. B, ll. 354-66, details closely corresponding to lines 1-7 and 13-22 of *Incipient Madness* (v. Vol. I, p. 314):

- (a) A cold bare wall whose top you see is trick'd  
With weeds and the rank spear-grass—from this casement  
You see the swallow's nest has dropp'd away,  
A wretched covert 'tis for man or beast  
And when the poor man's horse that shelters there  
Turns from the beating wind and open sky  
The iron links with which his feet are clogg'd  
Mix their dull clanking with the heavy sound  
Of falling rain, a melancholy thing  
To any man who has a heart to feel

**There are several attempts:**

- (b) But two nights gone I cross'd this dreary moor  
Just as the moon was rising  
The poor man's horse that feeds along the lanes  
Had hither come within these roofless walls  
To weather out the storm
- (c) The poor man's horse  
That feeds along the lanes, from cold night showers  
Finds shelter now within the chimney wall  
I heard him turning from the beating rain  
And open sky, and as he turn'd I heard. . . .
- (d) But two nights gone I cross'd this dreary moor  
In the still moonlight, when I reached the hut  
I looked within and all was still and dark  
Only within the ruin I beheld  
At a small distance on the dusky ground  
A broken pane which glitter'd to the moon.

The inception of the two poems, *The Ruined Cottage* and *Incipient Madness*, must belong to the same period of spiritual gloom, possibly 1795, and must refer to the same incident, a visit to a desolate ruined cottage.

Next we must presuppose a MS., A<sup>2</sup>, of *The Ruined Cottage* comprising the Story of Margaret read to Coleridge in June 1797 and to

Mary Hutchinson during her visit to Racedown, March–June of the same year. That it was a very much shorter narrative than that developed in MS. B is proved by D. W.'s letter to M. H., March 5, 1798, quoted below. One important difference is betrayed by a variant in l. 740 as transcribed in Coleridge's letter of June 1797: the Pedlar is here addressed as "Stranger", instead of "my friend" as in MS. B, where, however, "Stranger", mechanically copied from the earlier version, has been deleted. This clearly shows that in the first version of the tale the Pedlar was a person unknown to the poet, casually met on the road near the cottage, and not, as he became later, his old friend.

MS. B consists of 52 octavo sheets roughly stitched together, written in a clear hand by D. W. on one side of the paper. It has a few corrections by W. W. and on the versos some additions by him. It can be dated Jan.–Feb. 1798. For on March 5 D. W. wrote to M. H.: "You desire me, my dear Mary, to send you a copy of *The Ruined Cottage*. This is impossible, for it has grown to length of 900 lines. I will, however, send you a copy of that part which is immediately and solely connected with the Cottage. The Pedlar's character now makes a very, certainly the *most*, considerable part of the poem." Her transcript (MS. B<sup>2</sup>) was clearly taken from MS. B which it follows in its readings and its occasional defective lines; and her letter shows that B had only just been finished. The *Alfoxden* note-book in which entries were made between Jan. 20 and March 5, 1798 (*v. Prel. E. de S.*, p. xxi) contains a preliminary draft of *Exc. i.* 437–93 and various suggestions for the character of the Pedlar; *v. note to ll. 422–33 infra*.

As B is the first complete draft of what was to become Book I of *The Excursion* it seems worth while to reproduce it *in extenso*. It is to be noted that this version divides the poem into two parts (at l. 605 *Exc. i.*), that it concludes with l. 916, and that an early draft of most of *Exc. i.* 916–end is found in an *Addendum*.<sup>1</sup> The MS. clearly shows that at the time it was written, winter and spring 1797–8, Wordsworth had emerged from the slough of despond in which he first conceived the poem; he makes the wise old Pedlar interpret the story, and it is in the light of his faith that we are to read it. *v. lines* added at l. 366 (*app. crit. infra*), and the first attempts at a final reconciling passage at the end, as well as the *Addendum infra*. In the *apparatus criticus* I have given the variants found in A, B<sup>2</sup>, and D.<sup>3</sup> The numbers placed in brackets on the right-hand side of the page indicate the corresponding lines in W.'s final text of *Exc. i.*

<sup>1</sup> Written before April 1798, when Coleridge quotes the opening lines; *v. footnote, p. 401, infra*.

<sup>2</sup> For description of D, *v. p. 404, infra*.

## THE RUINED COTTAGE

*A Poem*

GIVE me a spark of Nature's fire,  
 'Tis the best learning I desire

My Muse though homely in attire  
 May touch the heart. Burns.

Part 1<sup>st</sup>

- 'Twas Summer, and the sun was mounted high,  
 Along the south the uplands feebly glared  
 Through a pale steam, and all the northern downs  
 In clearer air ascending shewed far off
- 5 Their surfaces on which the shadows lay  
 Of many clouds far as the sight could reach  
 Along the horizon's edge, that lay in spots  
 Determined and unmoved; with steady beams  
 Of clear and pleasant sunshine interposed;
- 10 Pleasant to him who on the soft cool grass  
 Extends his careless limbs beside the root (10)  
 Of some huge oak whose aged branches make  
 A twilight of their own, a dewy shade  
 Where the wren warbles, while the dreaming man,
- 15 Half conscious of that soothing melody, (14)  
 With sidelong eye looks out upon the scene  
 By those impending branches made [more soft]  
 More soft and distant. Other lot was mine; (18)  
 Across a bare wide Common I had toiled
- 20 With languid feet which by the slippery ground  
 Were baffled still; and when I stretched myself  
 On the brown earth, my limbs from very heat  
 Could find no rest, nor my weak arm disperse  
 The insect host which gathered round my face (24)
- 25 And joined their murmurs to the tedious noise  
 Of seeds of bursting gorse which crackled round.  
 I rose and turned towards a group of trees  
 Which midway in that level stood alone,  
 And thither come at length beneath a shade
- 30 Of clustering elms that sprang from the same root  
 I found a ruined Cottage—four clay walls (30)
- 5-7 Their surfaces with shadows dappled o'er  
 Of deep embattled clouds: far as the sight  
 Could reach those many shadows lay in spots *B originally and D*
- 17 more soft: *supplied from D* 27 I turned my steps *B del., B<sup>3</sup>*
- 30-1 A ruin'd cottage four bare shapeless walls  
 That midway on that level stood alone *Alfoxden MS.*
- 31 house, four naked walls D

- That stared upon each other. 'Twas a spot  
 The wandering gypsey in a stormy night  
 Would pass it with his moveables to house  
 35 On the open plain beneath the imperfect arch  
 Of a cold lime-kiln. As I looked around  
 Beside the door I saw an aged Man  
 Stretched on a bench whose edge with short bright moss  
 Was green, and studded o'er with fungus flowers.  
 40 An iron-pointed staff lay at his side. (37)  
 Him had I seen the day before, alone  
 And in the middle of the public way  
 Standing to rest himself. His eyes were turned  
 Towards the setting sun, while, with that staff  
 45 Behind him fixed, he propped a long white pack  
 Which crossed his shoulders; wares for maids who live  
 In lonely villages or straggling huts.  
 I knew him—he was born of lowly race  
 On Cumbrian hills, and I have seen the tear  
 50 Stand in his luminous eye when he described  
 The house in which his early youth was passed  
 And found I was no stranger to the spot.  
 I loved to hear him talk of former days  
 And tell how when a child, ere yet of age  
 55 To be a shepherd, he had learned to read  
 His bible in a school that stood alone,  
 Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge, (123)  
 Far from the sight of city spire, or sound  
 Of Minster clock. [He from his native hills (125) (340)  
 60 Had wandered far, much had he seen of men,  
 Their manners, their enjoyments and pursuits,  
 Their passions and their feelings, chiefly those  
 Essential and eternal in the heart  
 Which mid the simpler forms of rural life (345)

32-6 'Twas . . . As *not in D which has* I looked round, And near the door  
 I saw, *etc.*

38-9 Alone, and stretched upon the cottage bench *verso and D*

After 40 With instantaneous joy I recognized  
 That pride of nature and of lowly life  
 The venerable Armytage, a friend  
 As dear to me as is the setting sun.  
 He lay, his pack of rustic merchandize  
 Pillowing his head, *etc. verso and D (cf. 303)*

42 And on the middle of the heath *B<sup>3</sup> corr. to text*

59 After "Minster Clock" there is a mark which clearly brackets the follow-  
 ing 10½ lines, 59-69, so that the MS. runs on "From that bleak tene-  
 ment . . .", l. 70 *infra*. The bracketed lines are to be inserted at l. (264) *infra*.

- 65 Exist more simple in their elements  
 And speak a plainer language. He possessed (347)  
 No vulgar mind, though he had passed his life  
 In this poor occupation, first assumed  
 From impulses of curious thought from such]  
 [Bottom of page in MS.; the next page begins:]
- 70 From that bleak tenement (125)  
 He many an evening to his distant home  
 In solitude returning saw the hills  
 Grow larger in the darkness, all alone  
 Beheld the stars come out above his head,
- 75 And travelled through the wood, no comrade near, (130)  
 To whom he might confess the things he saw.  
 So the foundations of his mind were laid  
 In such communion, not from terror free.  
 While yet a child, and long before his time
- 80 He had perceived the presence and the power (135)  
 Of greatness, and deep feelings had impressed  
 Great objects on his mind, with portraiture  
 And colour so distinct [that on his mind]  
 They lay like substances, and almost seemed
- 85 To haunt the bodily sense. He had received  
 A precious gift, for as he grew in years (140)  
 With these impressions would he still compare  
 All his ideal stores, his shapes and forms,  
 And being still unsatisfied with aught
- 90 Of dimmer character, he thence attained  
 An *active* power to fasten images (145)  
 Upon his brain, and on their pictured lines  
 Intensely brooded, even till they acquired  
 The liveliness of dreams. Nor did he fail,
- 95 While yet a child, with a child's eagerness,  
 Incessantly to turn his ear and eye (150)  
 On all things which the rolling seasons brought  
 To feed such appetite. Nor this alone  
 Appeased his yearning; in the after day
- 100 Of boyhood, many an hour in caves forlorn  
 And in the hollow depth of naked crags (155)  
 He sate, and even in their fixed lineaments,  
 Or from the power of a peculiar eye,  
 Or by creative feeling overborne,
- 105 Or by predominance of thought oppressed,
- 82 Great objects with outline and portraiture *verso* 83 that on his  
 mind] *supplied from D* 88 All shapes and forms that came into his  
 mind *verso*
- 92-3 Upon his thought, retouch'd till they acquired *verso*

- Even in their fixed and steady lineaments (160)  
 He traced an ebbing and a flowing mind,  
 Expression ever varying. In his heart  
 Love was not yet, nor the pure joy of love,  
 110 By sound diffused, or by the breathing air, (188)  
 Or by the silent looks of happy things,  
 Or flowing from the universal face (190)  
 Of earth and sky. But he had felt the power  
 Of nature, and already was prepared  
 115 By his intense conceptions to receive  
 Deeply the lesson deep of love, which he  
 Whom Nature, by whatever means, has taught (195)  
 To feel intensely, cannot but receive.
- Ere his ninth summer he was sent abroad  
 120 To tend his father's sheep, such was his task  
 Henceforward till the later day of youth.  
 Oh! then what soul was his when on the tops  
 Of the high mountains he beheld the sun  
 Rise up and bathe the world in light. He looked, (200)  
 125 The ocean and the earth beneath him lay  
 In gladness and deep joy. The clouds were touched  
 And in their silent faces did he read  
 Unutterable love. Sound needed none (205)  
 Nor any voice of joy: his spirit drank  
 130 The spectacle. Sensation, soul and form  
 All melted into him. They swallowed up  
 His animal being; in them did he live  
 And by them did he live. They were his life. (210)  
 In such access of mind, in such high hour  
 135 Of visitation from the living God,  
 He did not feel the God; he felt his works;  
 Thought was not. In enjoyment it expired.  
 Such hour by prayer or praise was unprofaned,  
 He neither prayed, nor offered thanks or praise, (216)  
 140 His mind was a thanksgiving to the power  
 That made him. It was blessedness and love.  
 A shepherd on the lonely mountain tops  
 Such intercourse was his, and in this sort (220)  
 Was his existence oftentimes possessed.  
 145 Ah! *then* how beautiful, how bright appeared  
 The written promise; he had early learned  
 To reverence the volume which displays  
 The mystery, the life which cannot die; (225)  
 But in the mountains did he *feel* his faith  
 150 There did he see the writing—All things there  
 Looked immortality, revolving life,

- And greatness still revolving, infinite ;  
 There littleness was not, the least of things (230)  
 Seemed infinite, and there his spirit shaped  
 155 Her prospects, nor did he *believe*—he saw,  
 What wonder if his being thus became  
 Sublime and comprehensive. Low desires  
 Low thoughts had there no place, yet was his heart (235)  
 Lowly ; for he was meek in gratitude  
 160 Oft as he called to mind those ecstasies,  
 And whence they flowed, and from them he acquired  
 Wisdom which works through patience ; thence he learned  
 In many a calmer hour of sober thought (240)  
 To look on nature with an humble heart  
 165 Self-questioned where it did not understand,  
 And with a superstitious eye of love.  
 Small need had he of books ; for many a tale (163)  
 Traditionary round the mountains hung,  
 And many a legend peopling the dark woods  
 170 Nourished Imagination in her growth,  
 And gave the mind that apprehensive power  
 By which she is made quick to recognize  
 The moral properties and scope of things.  
 Yet greedily he read and read again (170)  
 175 Whate'er the rustic Vicar's shelf supplied,  
 The life and death of Martyrs who sustained  
 Intolerable pangs, and here and there  
 A straggling volume torn and incomplete (177)  
 Which left half-told the preternatural tale,  
 180 Romance of giants, chronicle of fiends  
 Profuse in garniture of wooden cuts  
 Strange and uncouth, dire faces, figures dire,  
 Sharp-kneed, sharp-elbowed, and lean-ankled too  
 With long and ghostly shanks, forms which once seen (184)  
 185 Could never be forgotten. Things though low  
 Though low and humble, not to be despised  
 By such as have observed the curious links  
 With which the perishable hours of life
- 166 eye of love. *Here is added, on verso:*  
 Thus passed the time yet to the neighbouring town (244)  
 He often went with what small overplus  
 His earnings might supply, and brought away  
 The book which most had tempted his desires  
 While at the stall he read. Among the hills  
 He gazed upon that mighty orb of song  
 The divine Milton. Other lore so D, but Lore of (250)  
 different kind, going on at l. 191

- Are bound together, and the world of thought  
 190 Exists and is sustained. A different store, (250)  
 The annual savings of a toilsome life,  
 The Schoolmaster supplied; books that explain  
 The purer elements of truth involv'd  
 In lines and numbers, and by charm severe,  
 195 Especially perceived where Nature droops (255)  
 And feeling is suppress'd, preserve the mind  
 Busy, in solitude and poverty.  
 And thus employed he many a time forgot  
 The listless (creeping) hours when in the hollow vale,  
 200 Hollow and green, he lay on the green turf (260)  
 In lonesome idleness. What could he do?  
 Nature was at his heart, and he perceived  
 Though yet he knew not how, a wasting power (265)  
 In all things which from her sweet influence  
 205 Might tend to wean him, therefore with her hues  
 Her forms and with the spirit of her forms  
 He cloathed the nakedness of austere truth.  
 While yet he linger'd in the elements (270)  
 Of science, and among her simplest laws,  
 210 His triangles, they were the stars of heaven,  
 The *silent* stars; his altitudes the crag  
 Which is the eagle's birthplace; or some peak (275)  
 Familiar with forgotten years, which shews,  
 Inscribed, as with the silence of the thought,  
 215 Upon its bleak and visionary sides,  
 The history of many a winter storm,  
 Or obscure records of the path of fire. (279)  
 Yet with these lonesome sciences he still  
 Continued to amuse the heavier hours  
 220 Of solitude, and solitary thought.  
 But now, before his twentieth year was pass'd (280)  
 Accumulated feelings press'd his heart  
 With an encreasing weight; he was o'er power'd  
 By Nature, and his mind became disturbed,  
 225 And many a time he wished the winds might rage (287)  
 When they were silent: from his intellect,  
 217/18 Or of the day of vengeance, when the sea  
 Rose like a giant from his sleep, and smote  
 The hills, and when the firmament of heaven  
 Rained darkness which the race of men beheld  
 Yea all the men that lived and had no hope *on verso*  
 224 . . . and his spirit was on fire With restless thoughts—his eye became  
 disturb'd *verso* D  
 226 . . . silent; far more fondly now  
 Than in his earlier season did he love

- And from the stillness of abstracted thought,  
 In vain he sought repose, in vain he turned, (292)  
 To science for a cure. I have heard him say  
 230 That at this time he scann'd the laws of light  
 With a strange pleasure of disquietude  
 Amid the din of torrents, when they send (295)  
 From hollow clefts, up to the clearer air  
 A cloud of mist which in the shining sun  
 235 Varies its rainbow hues. But vainly thus  
 And vainly by all other means he strove  
 To mitigate the fever of his heart. (300)  
 From Nature and her overflowing soul (*Prelude, Text A, ii. 416-34*)  
 He had received so much, that all his thoughts  
 240 Were steeped in feeling. He was only then  
 Contented, when, with bliss ineffable  
 He felt the sentiment of being, spread  
 O'er all that moves, and all that seemeth still,  
 O'er all which, lost beyond the reach of thought,  
 245 And human knowledge, to the human eye  
 Invisible, yet liveth to the heart,  
 O'er all that leaps, and runs, and shouts, and sings,  
 Or beats the gladsome air, o'er all that glides  
 Beneath the wave, yea in the wave itself  
 250 And mighty depth of waters. Wonder not  
 If such his transports were; for in all things  
 He saw one life, and felt that it was joy.  
 One song they sang, and it was audible,  
 Most audible then, when the fleshly ear  
 255 O'ercome by grosser prelude of that strain,  
 Forgot its functions, and slept undisturbed.  
 These things he had sustained in solitude  
 Even till his bodily strength began to yield  
 Beneath their weight. The mind within him burnt  
 260 And he resolved to quit his native hills.  
 He asked his father's blessing, and assumed  
 This lowly occupation. The old man

- Tempestuous nights the uproar and the sounds  
 That live in darkness; from his intellect *verso D*  
 260/1 The Father strove to make his son perceive  
 As clearly as the old man did himself  
 With what advantage he might teach a school (312)  
 In the adjoining village. But the youth  
 Who of this service made a short essay  
 Found that the wandrings of his thought were then  
 A misery to him, that he must resign  
 A task he was unable to perform. *verso D* (315)

- Bless'd him and prayed for him, yet with a heart  
 264 Foreboding evil.\* [He from his native hills  
 Had wandered far, much had he seen of men  
 Their manners, their enjoyments and pursuits  
 Their passions and their feelings, chiefly those  
 Essential and eternal in the heart  
 Which mid the simpler forms of rural life (345)  
 Exist more simple in their elements  
 And speak a plainer language.† He possessed

\* Here is a blank space which is clearly meant to be filled by ll. 59-69 *supra*.

† The following passage is written on the next three versos:

Many a year

Of lonesome meditation and impelled  
 By curious thought he was content to toil  
 In this poor calling which he now pursued  
 From habit and necessity. He walked  
 Among the [     ]<sup>1</sup> haunts of vulgar men  
 Unstained; the talisman of constant thought  
 And kind<sup>2</sup> sensations in a gentle heart  
 Preserv'd him; every shew of vice to him  
 Was a remembrancer of what he knew  
 Or a fresh seed of wisdom, or produced  
 That tender interest which the virtuous feel  
 Among the wicked, which when truly felt  
 May bring the bad man nearer to the good,  
 But, innocent of evil, cannot sink  
 The good man to the bad. Among the woods (347)  
 A lone enthusiast, and among the hills  
 Itinerant in this labour (In this way-wandering business) he had passed  
 The better portion of his time, and there (350)  
 From day to day had his affections breathed  
 The wholesome air of nature; there he kept  
 In solitude, and solitary thought,  
 So pleasant were those comprehensive views,  
 His mind in a just equipoise of love. (355)  
 Serene it was, unclouded by the cares  
 Of ordinary life, unvexed, unwarped,  
 By partial bondage. In his steady course  
 No piteous evolutions had he felt,  
 No wild varieties of joy or grief, (360)  
 Unoccupied by sorrow of its own  
 His heart lay open and by nature tuned  
 And constant disposition of his thoughts  
 To sympathy with Man, he was alive  
 To all that was enjoyed where'er he went, (365)

<sup>1</sup> blank in B: impure D

<sup>2</sup> pure *corr.* to kind B

No vulgar mind though he had passed his life  
 In this poor occupation, first assumed  
 From impulses of curious thought, from such]  
 265 Continued many a year and now pursued  
 From habit and necessity. His eye  
 Flashing poetic fire he would repeat

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And all that was endured and in himself  
 Happy and quiet in his cheerfulness  
 He had no painful pressure from within  
 Which made him turn away from wretchedness  
 With coward fears. He could afford to suffer (370)  
 With those whom he saw suffer. Hence it was  
 That in our best experience he was rich  
 The home-felt wisdom of our daily life.  
 He had observ'd the progress and decay (375)  
 Of many minds, of minds and bodies too  
 The history of many families,  
 And how they prosper'd, how they lived in peace  
 And happiness, and how they were o'erthrown  
 By passion or mischance, or such misrule  
 Among the [unthinking D] masters of the earth (380)  
 As makes the nations groan. He was a man (422)  
 One whom you could not pass without remark—  
 If you had met him on a rainy day  
 You [would] have stopped to look at him, Robust  
 Active and nervous was his gait, his limbs  
 And his whole figure breathed intelligence, (425)  
 His Body, tall and shapely, shewed in front  
 A faint line of the hollowness of age,  
 Or, rather, what appeared the curvature  
 Of toil, his head looked up steady and fixed;  
 Age had condensed<sup>1</sup> the rose upon his cheek  
 But had not tamed his eye, which, under brows  
 Of hoary grey, had meanings which it brought  
 From years of youth which, like a being made (430)  
 Of many beings, he had wondrous skill  
 To blend with meanings of the years to come,  
 Human or such as lie beyond the grave— (433)  
 Long had I loved him—Oh! it was most sweet  
 To hear him tell of things which he had seen,  
 To hear him teach in unambitious style  
 Reasoning and thought, by painting as he did  
 The manners and the passions. Many a time  
 He made a holyday and left his pack  
 Behind, and we two wandered through the hills  
 A pair of random Travellers—His eye (v. 266)

<sup>1</sup> compressed MS. D

- The songs of Burns and as we trudged along  
 Together did we make the hollow grove  
 270 Ring with our transports: though he was untaught,  
 In the dead lore of schools undisciplined,  
 Why should he grieve? he was a chosen son (*Prelude, Text A, iii. 82*)  
 To him was given an ear which deeply felt  
 The voice of Nature in the obscure wind  
 275 The sounding mountain and the running stream.  
 To every natural form, rock, fruit and flower (*Prelude, Text A,*  
 Even the loose stones that cover the highway [*iii. 124*]  
 He gave a moral life, he saw them feel  
 Or linked them to some feeling. In all shapes  
 280 He found a secret and mysterious soul,  
 A fragrance and a spirit of strange meaning. (*ib. 134*)  
 Though poor in outward shew he was most rich, (*ib. 141*)  
 He had a world about him, 'twas his own  
 He made it, for it only lived to him  
 285 And to the God who looked into his mind.  
 Such sympathies would often bear him far  
 In outward gesture, and in visible look,  
 Beyond the common seeming of mankind.  
 Some called it madness—such it might have been (*ib. 147*)  
 290 But that he had an eye that evermore  
 Looked deep into the shades of difference (*ib. 158*)  
 As they lie hid in all exterior forms  
 Near or remote, minute or vast, an eye  
 Which from a stone, a tree, a withered leaf,  
 295 To the broad ocean and the azure heavens  
 Spangled with kindred multitudes of stars  
 Could find no surface where its power might sleep,  
 Which spake perpetual logic to his soul, (*ib. 165*)  
 And by an unrelenting agency  
 300 Did bind his feelings even as in a chain. (*ib. 167*)  
 So was he framed. Now on the Bench he lay (*434*)  
 Stretched at his ease (length), and with that weary load  
 Pillowed his head. I guess he had no thought  
 Of his way-wandering life. His eyes were shut, (*440*)  
 305 The shadows of the breezy elms above  
 Dappled his face. With thirsty heat oppressed  
 At length I hailed him, glad to see his hat  
 Bedewed with water-drops, as if the brim (*445*)  
 Had newly scooped a running stream. He rose
- 268 . . . Burns or many a ditty wild  
 Which he had fitted to the moorland harp,  
 His own sweet verse, and as we *verso and D*

- 310 And, pointing to a sun-flower, bade me climb (451)  
 The [ ] wall where that same gaudy flower  
 Looked out upon the road. It was a plot  
 Of garden ground now wild, its matted weeds  
 Marked with the steps of those whom as they pass'd (455)  
 315 The gooseberry trees that shot in long [lank slips]  
 Or currants hanging from their leafless stems  
 In scanty strings had tempted to o'erleap  
 The broken wall. Within that cheerless spot  
 Where two tall hedgrows of thick willow boughs (460)  
 320 Joined in a damp cold nook I found a well  
 Half choaked  
 I slaked my thirst and to the shady bench  
 Returned, and while I stood unbonneted (466)  
 To catch the current of the breezy air  
 325 The old man said "I see around me [here]  
 Things which you cannot see. We die, my Friend, (470)  
 Nor we alone, but that which each man loved  
 And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
 Dies with him or is changed, and very soon  
 330 Even of the good is no memorial left. (474)  
 The Waters of that spring if they could feel (485)  
 Might mourn. They are not as they were, the bond  
 Of brotherhood is broken; time has been  
 When every day the touch of human hand  
 335 Disturbed their stillness, and they ministered (490)  
 To human comfort. As I stooped to drink  
 Few minutes gone at that deserted well  
 What feelings came to me! A spider's web  
 Across its mouth hung to the water's edge  
 340 And on the wet and slimy foot-stone lay  
 The useless fragment of a wooden bowl. (493)  
 It moved my very heart. The day has been  
 When I would never pass this road but she  
 Who lived within these walls, when I appeared,  
 345 A daughter's welcome gave me, and I loved her (499)  
 As my own child. Oh Sir! The good die first  
 And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust  
 Burn to the socket. Many a passenger

311 [ ]; a blank in both B and D 315 lank slips] supplied from  
 D 318-25 A draft of these lines is in the Alfaxden MS. 319  
 willow corr. to alder D 321 Half (ohoked deleted) covered up with  
 willow-flowers and grass added to D 324 motion of the cooler air  
 D 325 here] supplied from D 331-2 D as Exc. i. 475-86  
 342-61 A draft of these lines is in Alfaxden MS.

- Has blessed poor Margaret for her gentle looks  
 350 When she upheld the cool refreshment drawn  
 From that forsaken well, and no one came (505)  
 But he was welcome—no one went away  
 But that it seemed she loved him. She is dead,  
 The worm is on her cheek, and this poor hut  
 355 Stripped of its outward garb of household flowers  
 Of rose and sweetbriar (jasmine) offers to the wind  
 A cold bare wall whose earthy top is tricked  
 With weeds and the rank spear-grass; she is dead  
 And nettles rot and adders sun themselves  
 360 Where we have sate together while she nursed  
 Her infant at her bosom. The wild colt  
 The unstalled heifer and the Potter's ass  
 Find shelter now within the chimney wall  
 Where I have seen her evening hearth-stone blaze  
 365 And through the window spread upon the road  
 Its chearful light. You will forgive me, Sir,  
 I feel I play the truant with my tale.  
 She had a husband, an industrious man (520)  
 Sober and steady. I have heard her say
- 351 well] spring D and B *alt.* 356 sweet-briar] jasmine A: wood-  
 bine B<sup>2</sup>
- 358 . . . spear-grass; from this casement  
 You see the swallow's nest has dropp'd away A and *Christabel* MS.
- 360-1 Upon the floor where I have seen [her] sit  
 And rock her baby in its Cradle A  
 Where we have sat together while she rock'd  
 Her baby in its cradle *Christabel* MS.
- 361 breast. The unshod colt D 361-3 *For readings of A v. p. 377*  
*supra* 362 unstalled] wandering D
- 366-7 *A later draft written on verso of previous page in W. W.'s hand runs:*  
 But I have spoken thus  
 With an ungrateful temper and have read  
 The forms of things with an unworthy eye  
 She sleeps in the calm earth and peace is here.  
 I well remember that those very plumes  
 Those weeds and the high spear-grass on that wall  
*etc. as addendum to MS. B infra 124-34 and Exc. i (1814), 944-55*  
 . . . Appeared an idle dream that could not live  
 Where meditation was. I turned away  
 And walked along the road (my path) in happiness.  
 You will forgive me, Sir. I feel I play  
 The truant with my tale—Poor Margaret
- 367 But often on this cottage do I muse  
 As on a picture, till my wiser mind  
 Sinks, yielding to the foolishness of grief. D

- 370 That he was up and busy at his loom  
 In summer ere the mower's scythe had swept (525)  
 The dewy grass, and in the early spring  
 Ere the last star had vanished. They who passed  
 At evening from behind the garden fence
- 375 Might hear his busy spade which he would ply  
 After his daily work till the day-light (530)  
 Was gone, and every leaf and flower were lost  
 In the dark hedges. So they pass'd their days  
 In peace and comfort, and two pretty babes
- 380 Were their best hope next to the God in Heaven.  
 —You may remember, now some ten years gone, (535)  
 Two blighting seasons, when the fields were left  
 With half a harvest (tillage); it pleased heaven to add  
 A worse affliction in the plague of war.
- 385 A happy land was stricken to the heart. (540)  
 'Twas a sad time of sorrow and distress.  
 A wanderer among the cottages  
 I with my pack of winter raiment saw  
 The hardships of that season; many rich
- 390 Sank down as in a dream among the poor,  
 And of the poor did many cease to be, (545)  
 And their place knew them not. Meanwhile abridged  
 Of daily comforts, gladly reconciled  
 To numerous self-denials, Margaret
- 395 Went struggling on through those calamitous years  
 With cheerful hope, but ere the second spring (550)  
 A fever seized her husband. In disease  
 He lingered long, and when his strength returned  
 He found the little he had stored to meet
- 400 The hour of accident or crippling age (555)  
 Was all consumed. As I have said, 'twas now  
 A time of trouble—shoals of artizans  
 Were from their daily labour turned away (560)  
 To hang for bread on parish charity
- 405 They and their wives and children, happier far  
 Could they have lived as do the little birds  
 That peck along the hedges, or the kite  
 That makes his dwelling in the mountain rocks. (565)  
 Ill fared it now with Robert, he who dwelt
- 410 In this poor cottage; at his door he stood
- 389 What the poor suffer'd—Many of the rich A 396 spring]  
 autumn D
- 392-7 'Twas at this time  
 As Margaret told me on this very bench  
 A Fever, etc. A

- And whistled many a snatch of merry tunes  
 That had no mirth in them, or with his knife (570)  
 Carved uncouth figures on the heads of sticks,  
 Then idly sought about through every nook  
 415 Of house or garden any casual task  
 Of use or ornament, and with a strange  
 Amusing but uneasy novelty (575)  
 He blended where he might the various tasks  
 Of summer, autumn, winter, and of spring.  
 420 The passenger might see him at the door  
 With his small hammer on the threshold stone  
 Pointing lame buckle-tongues and rusty nails,  
 The treasured store of an old household box,  
 Or braiding cords or weaving bells and caps  
 425 Of rushes, playthings for his babes.  
 But this endured not, his good-humour soon  
 Became a weight in which no pleasure was  
 And poverty brought on a petted mood (580)  
 And a sore temper, day by day he drooped,  
 430 And he would leave his home, and to the town  
 Without an errand would he turn his steps,  
 Or wander here and there among the fields.  
 One while he would speak lightly of his babes (585)  
 And with a cruel tongue, at other times  
 435 He played with them wild freaks of merriment;  
 And 'twas a piteous thing to see the looks  
 Of the poor innocent children. 'Every smile',  
 Said Margaret to me, here beneath these trees, (590)  
 'Made my heart bleed.' At this the old man paused  
 440 And looking up to those enormous elms  
 He said, "'tis now the hour of deepest noon,  
 At this still season of repose and peace,  
 This hour when all things which are not at rest (595)  
 Are chearful, while this multitude of flies  
 445 Fills all the air with happy melody,  
 Why should a tear be in an old Man's eye?  
 Why should we thus with an untoward mind,  
 And in the weakness of humanity, (600)  
 From natural wisdom turn our hearts away,  
 450 To natural comfort shut our eyes and ears,  
 And, feeding on disquiet, thus disturb  
 [The calm] of Nature with our restless thoughts?' (604)

## 2nd Part

- He spake with somewhat of a solemn tone (605)  
 But when he ended there was in his face  
 455 Such easy chearfulness, a look so mild  
 That for a little time it stole away  
 All recollection and that simple tale  
 Passed from my mind like a forgotten sound. (610)  
 A while on trivial things we held discourse  
 460 To me soon tasteless. In my own despite  
 I thought of that poor woman as of one  
 Whom I had known and loved. He had rehearsed  
 Her homely tale with such familiar power (615)  
 With such a tender countenance, an eye  
 465 So busy, that the things of which he spake  
 Seemed present, and attention now relaxed  
 There was a heartfelt chillness in my veins.  
 I rose and turning from that breezy shade (620)  
 Went out into the open air, and stood  
 470 To drink the comfort of the warmer sun.  
 Long time I had not stayed ere looking round  
 Upon that tranquil ruin, and impelled  
 By a mild form of curious pensiveness  
 I begg'd of the old man that for my sake  
 475 He would resume his story. He replied (625)  
 It were a wantonness, and would demand  
 Severe reproof, if we were men whose hearts  
 Could hold vain dalliance with the misery  
 Even of the dead, contented thence to draw  
 480 A momentary pleasure, never marked (630)  
 By reason, barren of all future good.  
 But we have known that there is often found  
 In mournful thoughts, and always might be found,  
 A power to virtue friendly; were't not so  
 485 I am a dreamer among men—indeed (635)  
 An idle dreamer. 'Tis a common tale  
 By moving accidents uncharactered  
 A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed  
 In bodily form, and to the grosser sense  
 490 But ill adapted, scarcely palpable  
 To him who does not think. But at your bidding  
 I will proceed.

While thus it fared with them (640)

457-93 *Alfoxden MS. has a preliminary draft of these lines* 460 I  
 was depressed and *Alfoxden MS.* 472-4 and impelled . . . I] I returned  
 And D

- To whom this Cottage till that hapless year  
Had been a blessed home, it was my chance
- 495 To travel in a country far remote,  
And glad I was when, halting by yon gate  
Which leads from the green lane, again I saw  
These lofty elm-trees. Long I did not rest,  
With many pleasant thoughts I cheered my way (645)
- 500 O'er the flat common. At the door arrived  
I knocked, and when I entered with the hope  
Of usual greeting Margaret looked at me  
A little while, then turned her head away  
Speechless, and sitting down upon a chair (650)
- 505 Wept bitterly. I wist not what to do  
Or how to speak to her. Poor wretch! at last  
She rose from off her seat, and then, Oh Sir!  
I cannot *tell* how she pronounced my name,  
With fervent love and with a face of grief (655)
- 510 Unutterably helpless, and a look  
That seemed to cling upon me, she inquired  
If I had seen her husband. As she spake  
A strange surprize and fear came to my heart,  
And I could make no answer. Then she told (660)
- 515 That he had disappeared; just two months gone  
He left his house; two wretched days had passed,  
And on the third by the first break of light  
Within her casement full in view she saw  
A purse of gold. 'I trembled at the sight,' (665)
- 520 Said Margaret, 'for I knew it was his hand  
That placed it there, and on that very day  
By one a stranger, from my husband sent,  
The tidings came that he had joined a troop  
Of soldiers going to a distant land. (675)
- 525 He left me thus. Poor Man! he had not heart  
To take a farewell of me, and he feared  
That I should follow with my babes and sink  
Beneath the misery of a soldier's life.' (680)
- This tale did Margaret tell with many tears;  
530 And when she ended I had little power  
To give her comfort, and was glad to take  
Such words of hope from her own mouth as served (685)
- To cheer us both; but long we had not talked  
Ere we built up a pile of better thoughts  
535 And with a brighter eye she looked around  
As if she had been shedding tears of joy.

- We parted. It was then the early spring ; (690)  
 I left her busy with her garden tools ;  
 And well remember, o'er that fence she looked,  
 540 And while I paced along the foot-way path,  
 Called out, and sent a blessing after me,  
 With tender cheerfulness, and with a voice (695)  
 That seemed the very sound of happy thoughts.  
 I roved o'er many a hill and many a dale  
 545 With this my weary load, in heat and cold,  
 Through many a wood, and many an open ground  
 In sunshine or in shade, in wet or fair, (700)  
 Now blithe, now drooping, as it might befall,  
 My best companions now the driving winds  
 550 And now the 'trotting' brooks and whispering trees,  
 And now the music of my own sad steps,  
 With many a short-lived thought that passed between (705)  
 And disappeared. I measured back this road  
 Towards the wane of summer, when the wheat  
 555 Was yellow, and the soft and bladed grass  
 Sprung up afresh and o'er the hay-field spread  
 Its tender green. When I had reached the door (710)  
 I found that she was absent. In the shade  
 Where now we sit I waited her return.  
 560 Her cottage in its outward look appeared  
 As cheerful as before ; in any shew  
 Of neatness little changed, but that I thought  
 The honeysuckle crowded round the door (715)  
 And from the wall hung down in heavier loads  
 565 And knots of worthless stone-crop started out  
 Along the window's edge, and grew like weeds  
 Against the lower panes. I turned aside  
 And strolled into her garden. It was changed, (720)  
 The unprofitable bindweed spread his bells (728)  
 570 From side to side, and with unwieldy wreaths  
 Had dragged the rose from its sustaining wall  
 And bent it down to earth ; the border tufts,  
 Daisy, and thrift, and lowly camomile (722)  
 And thyme had straggled out into the paths  
 575 Which they were used to deck. Ere this an hour (730)  
 Was wasted, back I turned my restless steps  
 And as I walked before the door it chanced  
 A stranger passed, and guessing whom I sought  
 He said that she was used to ramble far.

- 580 The sun was sinking in the west, and now  
I sate with sad impatience. From within (735)  
Her solitary infant cried aloud ;  
The spot though fair seemed very desolate (740)  
The longer I remained more desolate.
- 585 And looking round I saw the corner stones  
Till then unmarked, on either side the door  
With dull red stains discoloured, and stuck o'er  
With tufts and hairs of wool as if the sheep (745)  
That feed upon the commons thither came
- 590 As to a couching-place and rubbed their sides  
Even at her threshold. The church-clock struck eight,  
I turned and saw her distant a few steps. (750)  
Her face was pale and thin, her figure too  
Was changed. As she unlocked the door she said
- 595 'It grieves me you have waited here so long  
But in good truth I've wandered much of late ;  
And sometimes, to my shame I speak, have need (755)  
Of my best prayers to bring me back again.'  
While on the board she spread our evening meal
- 600 She told me she had lost her elder child, (760)  
That he for months had been a serving boy  
Apprenticed by the parish. 'I am changed,  
And to myself,' said she, 'have done much wrong,  
And to this helpless infant. I have slept
- 605 Weeping, and weeping have I waked ; my tears (770)  
Have flowed as if my body were not such  
As others are, and I could never die.  
But I am now in mind and in my heart  
More easy, and I hope,' said she, 'that heaven
- 610 Will give me patience to endure the things (775)  
Which I behold at home.' It would have grieved  
Your very soul to see her. Sir, I feel  
The story linger in my heart. I fear  
'Tis long and tedious, but my spirit clings
- 615 To that poor woman, so familiarly (780)  
Do I perceive her manner and her look  
And presence, and so deeply do I feel

590 Familiarly, and found a couching place D      591 church-clock]  
house-clock D

602 parish. I]: . . . parish. I perceive  
You look at me, and you have cause. To-day  
I have been travelling far, and many days  
About the fields I wander, knowing this  
Only, that what I seek I cannot find  
And so I waste my time, for I D

- Her goodness that a vision of the mind,  
 A momentary trance comes over me  
 620 And to myself I seem to muse on one (785)  
 By sorrow laid asleep, or borne away,  
 A human being destined to awake  
 To human life or something very near  
 To human life, when he shall come again  
 625 For whom she suffered. Sir, it would have grieved (790)  
 Your very heart to see her, evermore  
 Her eyelids drooped, her eyes were downward cast,  
 And when she at her table gave me food  
 She did not look at me, her voice was low,  
 630 Her body was subdued. In every act (795)  
 Pertaining to her house-affairs appeared  
 The careless stillness which a thinking soul  
 Gives to an idle matter. Still she sighed,  
 But yet no motion of the breast was seen, (800)  
 635 No heaving of the heart. While by the fire  
 We sate together, sighs came on my ear  
 I knew not how, and scarcely whence they came. (803)  
 I took my staff, and when I kissed her babe  
 The tears were in her eyes. I left her then (810)  
 640 With the best hope and comfort I could give.  
 She thanked me for my will, but for my hope  
 It seemed she did not thank me. I returned,  
 And took my rounds along this road again.  
 Ere on its sunny bank the primrose flower (815)  
 645 Had chronicled the earliest day of spring.  
 I found her sad and drooping; she had learned  
 No tidings of her husband, if he lived  
 She knew not that he lived; if he were dead  
 She knew not he was dead. She seemed not changed (820)  
 650 In person or appearance, but her house  
 Bespoke a sleepy hand of negligence,  
 The floor was neither dry nor neat, the hearth  
 Was comfortless  
 The windows they were dim, and her few books  
 655 Which one upon the other heretofore (825)  
 Had been piled up against the corner panes  
 In seemly order, now with straggling leaves  
 Lay scattered here and there, open or shut,  
 As they had chanced to fall. Her infant babe  
 660 Had from its mother caught the trick of grief, (830)  
 And sighed among its playthings; once again  
 618 Her goodness, that not seldom in my walks D 649 not  
 changed] the same D 654 they] too D

- I turned towards the garden gate, and saw  
 More plainly still that poverty and grief  
 Were now come nearer to her; the earth was hard  
 665 With weeds defaced and knots of withered grass; (835)  
 No ridges there appeared of clear black mould,  
 No winter greenness. Of her herbs and flowers  
 It seemed the better part were gnawed away  
 Or trampled on the earth; a chain of straw  
 670 Which had been twisted round the tender stem (840)  
 Of a young apple-tree lay at its root,  
 The bark was nibbled round by truant sheep.  
 Margaret stood near, her infant in her arms  
 And seeing that my eye was on the tree  
 675 She said, 'I fear it will be dead and gone (845)  
 Ere Robert come again'. Towards the house  
 Together we returned and she enquired  
 If I had any hope. But for her babe  
 And for her little friendless Boy, she said,  
 680 She had no wish to live, that she must die (850)  
 Of sorrow. Yet I saw the idle loom  
 Still in its place. His Sunday garments hung  
 Upon the self-same nail—his very staff  
 Stood undisturbed behind the door, and when  
 685 I passed this way, beaten by autumn winds, (855)  
 She told me that her little babe was dead  
 And she was left alone. That very time,  
 I yet remember, through the miry lane  
 She walked with me a mile when the bare trees  
 690 Trickled with foggy damps, and in such sort (865)  
 That any heart had ached to hear her, begged  
 That wheresoe'r I went I still would ask  
 For him whom she had lost. We parted then,  
 Our final parting, for from that time forth  
 695 Did many seasons pass ere I return'd (870)  
 Into this tract again. Five tedious years  
 She lingered in unquiet widowhood  
 A wife and widow. Needs must it have been  
 A sore heart-wasting. I have heard, my Friend,  
 700 That in that broken harbour she would sit (875)  
 The idle length of half a sabbath day  
 There—where you see the toadstool's lazy head,  
 And when a dog passed by she still would quit

681-96 *A draft of these lines is in Alfoxden MS.*689 She went B<sup>1</sup>696/7 From their first separation, five long years D  
 have heard B *del.*

699 Master I

- The shade and look abroad. On this old Bench  
 705 For hours she sate, and evermore, her eye<sup>1</sup> (880)  
 Was busy in the distance, shaping things  
 Which made her heart beat quick. Seest thou that path ?  
 The greensward now has broken its grey line ;  
 There to and fro she paced through many a day  
 710 Of the warm summer, from a belt of flax (885)  
 That girt her waist spinning the long-drawn thread  
 With backward steps—yet ever as there passed  
 A Man whose garments shewed the Soldier's red  
 Or crippled Mendicant in Sailor's garb  
 715 The little child who sate to turn the wheel (890)  
 Ceased from his toil, and she with faltering voice  
 Expecting still to learn her husband's fate,  
 Made many a fond enquiry, and when they,  
 Whose presence gave no comfort, were gone by  
 720 Her heart was still more sad. And by yon gate (895)  
 Which bars the traveller's road she often stood  
 And when a stranger horseman came, the latch  
 Would lift, and in his face look wistfully  
 Most happy if from aught discovered there  
 725 Of tender feeling she might dare repeat  
 The same sad question. Meanwhile her poor hut (900)  
 Sank to decay, for he was gone, whose hand  
 At the first nippings of October frost  
 Closed up each chink, and with fresh bands of straw  
 730 Chequered the green-grown thatch. And so she lived (905)  
 Through the long winter, reckless and alone ;  
 Till this reft house, by frost, and thaw, and rain  
 Was sapped, and, when she slept, the nightly damps  
 Did chill her breast, and in the stormy day  
 735 Her tattered clothes were ruffled by the wind (910)  
 Even at the side of her own fire. Yet still  
 She loved this wretched spot, nor would for worlds  
 Have parted hence, and still that length of road  
 And this rude bench one torturing hope endeared,  
 740 Fast rooted at her heart ; and here, my friend, (915)  
 In sickness she remained, and here she died,  
 Last human tenant of these ruined walls."

The End.

<sup>1</sup> These lines from "her eye" to the end, 705-42, are quoted by S. T. C. in a letter to the Rev. J. P. Estlin from Racedown, June 1797 ; Griggs, i. 76

740 and, Stranger, here S. T. C.'s letter June 1797 and B *del.*

On the two next pages W. has made three different attempts at a reconciling passage for the close of the poem:

1. The old man ceased: he saw that I was moved.  
 From that low bench rising instinctively  
 I turned away in weakness, and my heart  
 Went back into the tale which he had told,  
 And when at last returning from my mind  
 I looked around, the cottage and the elms,  
 The road, the pathway, and the garden wall  
 Which old and loose and mossy o'er the road  
 Hung bellying, all appeared, I know not how  
 But to some eye within me all appeared  
 Colours and forms of a strange discipline.  
 The trouble which they sent into my thought  
 Was sweet, I looked and looked again, and to myself  
 I seemed a better and a wiser man.
2. And when at length the silence of my grief  
 By some irregular fancy from within  
 Or by some chance impression from without  
 Was first disturbed I looked around, the road  
 The door the pathway and the garden wall  
and then
 I well remember what I felt,—the road  
 The door, the pathway . . .  
 I turned to the old man, and said, my friend  
 Your words have consecrated many things.  
 And for the tale which you have told I think  
 I am a better and a wiser man.
3. How sweetly breathes the air—it breathes most sweet  
 And my heart feels it, how divinely fair  
 Are yon huge clouds, how lovely are these elms  
 That shew themselves with all their verdant leaves  
 And all the myriad veins of those green leaves  
 A luminous prospect fashioned by the sun,  
 The very sunshine spread upon the dust  
 Is beautiful.

He struck out these passages and returned to the lines rejected at l. 366 (*v. app. crit.* 366–7 *supra*), making them the culmination of a long reflective argument (much of which was afterwards incorporated in the *Exc.* Book IV) as follows:

[Addendum to MS. B]

Not useless do I deem  
 These quiet sympathies with things that hold  
 An inarticulate language; for the man (*Exc.* iv. 1207)  
 Once taught to love such objects as excite

- 5      No morbid passions no disquietude  
 No vengeance, and no hatred needs must feel  
 The joy of that pure principle of love  
 So deeply that unsatisfied with aught  
 Less pure and exquisite he cannot choose
- 10     But seek for objects of a kindred love  
 In fellow-natures and a kindred joy.  
 Accordingly he by degrees perceives  
 His feelings of aversion softened down  
 A holy tenderness pervade his frame (iv. 1220)
- 15     His sanity of reason not impaired  
 Say rather all his thoughts now flowing clear  
 From a clear fountain flowing he looks round  
 He seeks for good and finds the good he seeks<sup>1</sup>  
 Till execration and contempt are things
- 20     He only knows by name and if he hears  
 From other mouths the language which they speak  
 He is compassionate and has no thought  
 No feeling which can overcome his love.  
 And further, by contemplating these forms (iv. 1230)
- 25     In the relations which they bear to man  
 We shall discover what a power is theirs  
 To stimulate our minds, and multiply  
 The spiritual presences of absent things. (iv. 1234)
- 30     Then weariness shall cease. We shall acquire  
 The [                      ] habit by which sense is made  
 Subservient still to moral purposes (iv. 1248)
- 35     A vital essence, and a saving power.  
 Nor shall we meet an object but may read  
 Some sweet and tender lesson to our minds  
 Of human suffering or of human joy.  
 All things shall speak of Man, and we shall read  
 Our duties in all forms, and general laws  
 And local accidents shall tend alike  
 To quicken and to rouse, and give the will (iv. 1242)
- 40     And power which by a [                      ] chain of good  
 Shall link us to our kind. No naked hearts,  
 No naked minds shall then be left to mourn (iv. 1250)
- The burthen of existence. Science then *etc.*,  
    as *Exc.* iv. 1252-6, followed by  
 But better taught, and mindful of its use

<sup>1</sup> Coleridge quotes the first 18 lines of this passage (*but with shadowy for quiet in 2*) in a letter dated April 1798

- 50 Legitimate and its peculiar power 9  
 While with a patient interest it shall watch  
 The processes of things, and serve the cause (iv. 1258)  
 Of order and distinctness; not for this  
 Shall it forget that its most noble end (iv. 1260)
- 55 Its most illustrious province must be found  
 In ministering to the excursive power  
 Of intellect and thought. So build we up (iv. 1264)  
 The being that we are. For was it meant  
 That we should pore, and dwindle as we pore, (iv. 960)
- 60 For ever dimly pore on things minute,  
 On solitary objects, still beheld  
 In disconnection dead and spiritless,  
 And still dividing and dividing still,  
 Break down all grandeur, still unsatisfied
- 65 With our unnatural toil, while littleness (iv. 965)  
 May yet become more little, waging thus  
 An impious warfare with the very life  
 Of our own souls? Or was it ever meant (iv. 968)  
 That this majestic imagery, the clouds
- 70 The ocean and the firmament of heaven  
 Should lie a barren picture on the mind?  
 Never for ends of vanity and pain  
 And sickly wretchedness were we endued  
 Amid this world of feeling and of life
- 75 With apprehension, reason, will and thought,  
 Affections, organs, passions. Let us rise  
 From this oblivious sleep, these fretful dreams  
 Of feverish nothingness. Thus disciplined  
 All things shall live in us and we shall live
- 80 In all things that surround us. This I deem  
 Our tendency, and thus shall every day  
 Enlarge our sphere of pleasure and of power,  
 For thus the senses and the intellect  
 Shall each to each supply a mutual aid,
- 85 Invigorate and sharpen and refine  
 Each other with a power that knows no bound,  
 And forms and feelings acting thus, and thus  
 Reacting, they shall each acquire  
 A living spirit and a character
- 90 Till then unfelt, and each be multiplied  
 With a variety that knows no end.  
 Thus deeply drinking in the soul of things (iv. 1265)  
 We shall be wise perforce, and we shall move

- From strict necessity along the path  
 95 Of order and of good. Whate'er we see (iv. 1270)  
 Whate'er we feel, by agency direct  
 Or indirect, shall tend to feed and nurse  
 Our faculties, and raise to loftier heights  
 Our intellectual soul. The old man ceased (iv. 1275)  
 100 The words he uttered shall not pass away  
 They had sunk into me, but not as sounds (iv. 1285)  
 To be expressed by visible characters,  
 For while he spake my spirit had obeyed  
 The presence of his eye, my ear had drunk  
 105 The meanings of his voice. He had discoursed  
 Like one who in the slow and silent works,  
 The manifold conclusions of his thought,  
 Had brooded till Imagination's power  
 Condensed them to a passion whence she drew (iv. 1295)  
 110 Herself new energies, resistless force.  
 Yet still towards the cottage did I turn (i. 925)  
 Fondly, and trace with nearer interest  
 That secret spirit of humanity  
 Which, 'mid the calm oblivious tendencies  
 115 Of Nature, 'mid her plants, her weeds and flowers,  
 And silent overgrowings, still survived. (930)  
 The old man, seeing this, resumed, and said  
 My Friend, enough to sorrow have you given,  
 The purposes of Wisdom ask no more, (933)  
 120 Be wise and chearful, and no longer read  
 The forms of things with an unworthy eye.  
 She sleeps in the calm earth and peace is here. (941)  
 I well remember that those very plumes,  
 Those weeds and the high spear-grass on that wall,  
 125 By mist and silent rain-drops silvered o'er,  
 As once I passed, did to my mind convey (945)  
 So still an image of tranquillity,  
 So calm and still, and looked so beautiful,  
 Amid the uneasy thoughts which filled my mind,  
 130 That what we feel of sorrow and despair  
 From ruin and from change, and all the grief (950)  
 The passing shews of being leave behind  
 Appeared an idle dream that could not live  
 Where meditation was. I turned away (955)  
 135 And walked along my road in happiness.  
 He ceased, and now the sun declining shot

103 my mind and heart obeyed D

104 my ear drunk in D

106 silent] patient D

- A slant and mellow radiance, which began  
 To fall upon us when beneath the trees  
 We sate on that low bench ; and now we felt (960)  
 140 Admonished thus, the sweet hour coming on ;  
 A linnet warbled from those lofty elms  
 A thrush sang loud, and other melodies  
 At distance heard, peopled the milder air.  
 The old man rose and hoisted up his load ; (965)  
 145 Together casting then a farewell look  
 Upon those silent walls we left the shade  
 And chearfully pursued our evening way.
- 146-7 . . . we turned away  
 And pleasantly did we pursue our road B *del.*  
 147 And ere the stars were visible attained  
 A rustic inn, our evening resting-place D

MS. D, headed *The Ruined Cottage*, may have been copied in 1799. It is contained in a small octavo note-book bound in red leather, MS. 18 A, in which are also found, among other poems, *Adventures on Salisbury Plain*, parts of *Prelude* i and v, *Nutting*, and some of the *Matthew* poems. It is in D. W.'s neatest hand, with occasional corrections by W. In the main D follows B, making a few corrections, filling in most of the blanks and incorporating in the text many of the additional passages written on the versos. It concludes the poem by adding after the original last line ("Last human tenant of these ruined walls") lines corresponding with *Exc.* i. 917-24 followed by ll. 111-47 of *Addendum* to B with slight variations. But when it was copied W. seems to have become uneasy about the double-barrelled form the poem was taking ; and to have contemplated the publication of *The Ruined Cottage* without the lines on the Pedlar's character and background which made their first appearance in B. For it omits from the text ll. 41-303, and after adopting the four lines added to B after l. 40 (*v. app. crit.*), it goes on :

He lay, his pack of rustic merchandize  
 Pillowing his head. I guess he had no thought

as B 303 ff.

This leaves a compact poem, rightly entitled *The Ruined Cottage*: Part I has 197 lines, Part II 320.

The omitted lines are given as *Addenda*, evidently reserved for use in some other place, but rearranged more in accordance with the order in which they are found in *Exc.* i. Thus:

*Addendum* i:

41-59. MS. B (Minster clock).

70 (From that bleak tenement)-108 (ever varying) *after which it goes on:*

Thus informed

He had small need of books *etc.*, as 167-90

108 (Within his heart)—166 (eye of love) *followed by lines on verso of B after 186 (v. app. crit.), but with Lore of other kind for Other lore.*

191–220. (Of solitude.) *but running on*

Of solitude. Yet not the less he found  
In cold relation and the lifelessness  
Of truth, by oversubtlety dislodged  
From grandeur and from love, an idle toy,  
The dullest of all toys. He saw in truth  
A holy spirit and a breathing soul;  
He revered her and trembled at her look  
When, with a moral beauty in her face,  
She led him through the worlds.

W. has written out against this passage.

221 (But now)—60 (native hills) *followed by lines on verso of B (260/1); 261–4;*

60–6. *followed by passage on versos of B after 264 (v. app. crit.)*  
(Many a year . . . His eye)

267–70. (transports).

Here a blank space is left in the MS., and it is clear that what follows is rejected from the text and reserved for use elsewhere:

*Addendum ii:*

270 (though he was untaught)—300 (chain), *but with l. 273 He yet retained for To him was given, and 275/6*

From deep analogies by thought supplied  
Or consciousnesses not to be subdued

*Addendum iii is Addendum to B 1–110, p. 400 supra*

*Addendum iv.* Between the main text of *The Ruined Cottage* and the Addenda described above, but obviously added to the note-book later, on a space till then left blank, and probably, as I suggest in my account of MS. E *infra*, in 1801–2, is another draft which, beginning with 41–7 of B, goes on to give a new origin and antecedents to the Pedlar. The name Armytage is changed to Patrick Drummond, and instead of being born on the Cumbrian hills and brought up as a shepherd, he is now a Scotsman, who in boyhood tended cattle on the hills of Perthshire, but in later life made his pedlar's headquarters at Hawkshead, when the poet was a schoolboy. It runs thus:

He stood, his back towards me, but as soon  
As I drew near to him great joy was ours  
At this unthought-of meeting. For the night  
We parted nothing willingly, and now  
5 He by appointment waited for me here  
Beneath these elms, it being our joint wish  
To travel on together a few days.

—We were dear Friends; I from my childhood up

- Had known him, in a nook of Furness Fells  
 10 At Hawkshead, where I went to school nine years.  
 One room he had, the fifth part of a house,  
 A place to which he drew from time to time  
 And found a kind of home or harbour there.  
 He was the best Old Man! and often I  
 15 Delight to recollect him, and his looks,  
 And think of him and his affectionate ways.  
 In that same Town of Hawkshead where we dwelt  
 There was a little girl ten years of age,  
 But tiny for her years, a pretty dwarf,  
 20 Fair-hair'd, fair-fac'd, and though of stature small  
 In heart as forward as a lusty child.  
 Oft to his tenement this Girl would come  
 To play with the good Man, and he was wont  
 To tell her stories of his early life,  
 25 And often have I listen'd to their talk—  
 "Nay"—would she answer him, unsaying thus  
 All he had said to her, "you never could  
 Be a poor ragged little Boy, and hir'd  
 To the poor Man you talk [of] to herd Cattle  
 30 On a hill-side for forty [pence] a year"—  
 All which did to the Girl appear so strange  
 She could not credit it; and when she us'd  
 To doubt his words, as I remember well,  
 Spite of himself the good Man smile[d], and held  
 35 His hand up to his face to hide his smiles,  
 Because he knew that if the little Girl  
 Once spi'd them, she would then be sure, past doubt,  
 That he was joking. She being thus perplex'd  
 He was far better pleas'd to sing to her  
 40 Scotch songs, sometimes, but oftener to repeat  
 Scotch poetry, old ballads, and old tales,  
*Love-Gregory, William Wallace and Rob Roy.*  
 All this while she was sitting on a stool  
 Between his knees, and oft would she stand up  
 45 Upon her stool, and coax him with a kiss  
 To tell her more, and often times would he  
 Cry over her, and she would wonder why.  
 This, standing at his threshold, have I seen

10 ten corr. to nine  
 Alfouden MS.

5-82 A shorter draft of these lines appears in

17/18 There was a little Girl (and though in truth  
 This incident be something like a nook  
 Or pleasant corner which from my right path  
 Diverts me, yet I cannot pass it by) MS. E 2

- 50      Yea, many times, when he had little thought  
         That any one was near. And for myself  
         He lov'd me, out of many rosy Boys  
         Singled out me, as he in sport would say  
         For my grave looks, too thoughtful for my years.  
         His name was Drummond: the bare truth it was  
 55      Which he had told the Girl, that he had been  
         A Herd-Callan for forty pence a year,  
         Among the hills of Perthshire he was born      (i. 107)  
         His Father died and left behind three sons  
    (ere he was four years old)  
         And Patrick was the youngest of the three.  
 60      His Mother married for a second Mate  
         A School-master who taught the Boys to read  
         And bred them up and gave them as he could  
         Needful instruction, teaching them the ways  
         Of honesty and holiness severe.  
 65      Patrick as soon as he was six years old      (i. 118)  
         Served as a Herd-Boy all the summer through  
         But in the winter months he duly went  
         To his Step-Father's school that stood alone  
         Sole building on a mountain's dreary edge      (i. 123)  
 70      Far from the sight of City spire or sound  
         Of minster clock. From this bleak tenement  
         He in the evening sometimes to his home  
         In solitude return'd and saw the hills  
         Grow larger in the darkness; all alone  
 75      Beheld the stars come out above his head,  
         And travell'd through the wood with no one near      (i. 130)  
         To whom he might confess the things he saw.  
         He had small need of Books *etc.*      (i. 163)  
         His history I from himself have heard  
 80      Full often after I grew up and he  
         Found in my heart as he would kindly say  
         A kindred heart to his. His father died,  
         Could never be forgotten.  
    Thus was he  
         Bred up among the fields, and in a house  
 85      Virtuous, and wanting little to the growth      (i. 112)  
         Of a strong mind, although exceeding poor.  
         Pure livers were they all, austere and grave  
         And fearing God, the very children taught  
         Stern self-respect, a reverence for God's word      (i. 115)  
 90      And piety, scarce known on English land.  
         And thus did Patrick gather when a Boy  
         Some gloomy notions which in later life

- Would come to him at times, but from his birth  
 He had a gracious nature, genial blood  
 95 Flow'd in him, and the region of the heart  
 Even from the first was sensitive and kind.  
 Never had living man a gentler creed,  
 For love was his, and the pure joy of love, (i. 187)  
 By sound diffus'd, or by the breathing air,  
 100 Or by the silent looks of happy things,  
 Or flowing from the universal face (i. 190)  
 Of earth and sky; for he had early felt  
 The power of nature, early had been taught  
 By his intense conceptions to receive  
 105 Deeply the lesson deep of love which he  
 Whom Nature by whatever means has taught (i. 195)  
 To feel intensely cannot but receive.  
 He was a man of genius and yet more  
 A man of science too; among the hills,  
 110 While he was a hired Labourer tending herds  
 He gaz'd upon that mighty art of song.  
 The divine Milton. Lore of different kind (i. 250)  
 His step-father supplied, books that explain'd<sup>1</sup>  
*cetera desunt*

*Addendum v.* At another place in the note-book are found the following lines, intended as an alternative to B 220-64:

Of solitude, but now the time was come  
 When he, approaching to a man's estate  
 Began to think about his way of life  
 In future, and his worldly maintenance.  
 His mother strove *etc.*, as *verso* to B 260/1  
 His eldest Brother, elder than himself  
 Six years had travelled southward long before  
 To carry up and down a Pedlar's Pack  
 In England where he traded at that time  
 Healthy and prosperous—"I to him will go"  
 Said Patrick "I am stout as he, can bear  
 A Load with ease the weight of twenty stone"—  
 This plan, long time, had been his favourite thought.  
 He ask'd his Mother's blessing, and with tears  
 Thank'd the good man, his second father, ask'd

<sup>1</sup> An abbreviated form of ll. 5-57 of *Addendum iv* (43 lines for 53), with slight variants, is also found in the *Alfoxden* note-book of 1798. But this was almost certainly added later and probably only just before the insertion of *Addendum iv* in MS. 18 A. For it is found at the end of the book, *after* D. W. had taken it over for German exercises, and is the only poetic entry in her hand, all the earlier entries being rough drafts in W.'s hand.

From him parental blessings, and assum'd  
This lowly occupation. The good Pair  
Offer'd up prayers and blessed him but with hearts  
Foreboding evil.

This passage persists, with slight variants, through MSS. E, M, and P.

MS. E, a fair copy in the hand of D. W., with no heading but *Part First*, incorporates the important change noted above in Addendum iv to D. The Pedlar is brought back with different antecedents and a background further elaborated. The MS. can be assigned with some certainty to Dec.-March 1801-2. In D. W.'s *Journal*, from Dec. 21, 1801 to March 10, 1802, there are no less than twenty references to *The Pedlar*, as in all but one instance the poem is now called; of these the most significant are the following:

Dec. 21 (1801). Wm. sate beside me and read *The Pedlar*; He was in good spirits and full of hope as to what he should do with it.

Dec. 22. Wm. composed a few lines of *The Pedlar*.

Dec. 27. Mary wrote some lines of the third part<sup>1</sup> of Wm.'s poem which he brought to read to us.

Jan. 26 (1802). [The next reference to the poem; the W.s had been away from Grasmere for nearly a month.] Wm. had tired himself with working—he resolved to do better. . . . We sate till we were both tired, for Wm. wrote out part of his poem, and endeavoured to alter it, and so made himself ill.

Jan. 30. Wm. worked at *The Pedlar* all the morning. He kept the dinner waiting till four o'clock. He was much tired.

Feb. 1. William worked hard at *The Pedlar*, and tired himself.

Feb. 5. William not well. Sate up late at *The Pedlar*.

Feb. 7. We sate by the fire and . . . read *The Pedlar*, thinking it done; but lo! though Wm. could find fault with no one part of it, it was uninteresting, and must be altered. Poor Wm.!

Feb. 11. Wm. sadly tired and working still at *The Pedlar*.

Feb. 12. I recopied *The Pedlar*, but poor Wm. all the time at work. . . . I almost finished writing *The Pedlar*; but poor Wm. wore himself and me out with labour.

Feb. 13. Still at work at *The Pedlar*, altering and refitting.

Feb. 16. Wm. was better, had altered *The Pedlar*.

Feb. 28. Wm. very ill, employed with *The Pedlar*.

March 3. I was so unlucky as to propose to rewrite *The Pedlar*. Wm. got to work and was worn to death.

March 6. I wrote *The Pedlar*, and finished it.

March 7. I stitched up *The Pedlar*.

<sup>1</sup> E is the first MS. which divides the poem into three parts (1-433, 434-604, 605-end). It is also the first which incorporates the final reconciling passage and ends substantially as text of *Exc. i*

March 10. William has since tea been talking about publishing the Yorkshire Wolds poem [i.e. *Peter Bell*] with *The Pedlar*. [This is interesting as showing that at this time W. still regarded *The Pedlar* as a poem complete in itself, and not as a part of *The Excursion*.]

E was probably the MS. almost finished on Feb. 12, the work done in later February and early March being represented by a MS. which I refer to as E<sup>2</sup>, also written by D. W., a portion of which, ll. 1-356, is bound up with E.

MS. M is sufficiently described in *Prel.*, E. de S., p. xxi. It was transcribed by D. W., from MS. E<sup>2</sup>, in March 1804. The first leaf containing ll. 1-58 of *The Pedlar* is missing.

MS. P, written by M. W., is the first that regards the poem as an integral part of a longer whole. The note-book contains the first three books of *The Excursion*. The MS. down to iii. 324 represents, probably, a fair copy of W.'s work in the summer of 1806 (v. p. 371 *supra*); but he has interlarded the fair copy with corrections and additions throughout. v. note to i. 435 (*app. crit.*) *infra*.

Since MS. B is given in full *supra* with variants from A and D, I have referred in my *app. crit.* mainly to the succeeding MSS., where, unless otherwise stated, MSS. stands for E to P inclusive.

p. 7. 1 *et seq.* "All that relates to Margaret and the ruined cottage, etc., was taken from observations made in the South West of England, and certainly it would require more than seven league boots to stretch in one morning from a Common in Somersetshire or Dorsetshire to the heights of Furness Fells and the deep valleys they embosom."—I. F.

It is significant that W. made no attempt to adjust the landscape of the original *Ruined Cottage* to the setting of the Langdale valleys which he adopts as the main scene of *The Excursion*. The hot, bare, waterless common, the thatched cottage (903-4) with its grass-grown walls (942-3) are as remote as possible from those rocky valleys with their many streams and waterfalls, slate-roofed farms, and naked walls.

2-3. glared Through a pale steam] Cf. *An Evening Walk*, 37-8:

When, in the south, the wan noon, brooding still,  
Breathed a pale steam around the glaring hill.

12. A twilight of its own] Cf. *An Evening Walk*, 61: "And its own twilight softens the whole scene."

29. a brotherhood of lofty elms] Cf. *Sonnet composed at — Castle* (Vol. III, p. 83): "A brotherhood of venerable Trees."

51. (*app. crit.*) The alteration of 1845 is made to avoid the clash of final *th* with initial *th* "Beneath the . . .", cf. "Strange fits of passion" (Vol. II, p. 29), where "Beneath the evening moon" is altered to "Beneath an . . .". Quillinan writes, March 19, 1844: "Mr. Words-

worth has been working very hard lately, to very little purpose, to mend the versification of *The Excursion*." (*C.R.* ii, p. 548); v. also letter of M. W. to H. C. R., April 7, 1844 (*C.R.* ii, p. 551). But his alterations nearly always enliven the rhythm.

113-14. Cf. *Resolution and Independence*, ll. 97-8:

Such as grave Livers do in Scotland use,  
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

118-300. Much of this passage can be closely paralleled by what W. relates in *The Prelude* of his own experiences as a boy. Lines 238-56 of MS. B were removed to *Prelude*, ii (*Text A*, 416-34).

148. liveliness of dreams] It is generally stated that the images of dreams are vague and indistinct and lack colour. W.'s experience was the opposite.

179. left half-told] Cf. *Il Penseroso*, 109-10:

Or call up him who left half told  
The story of Cambuscan bold.

185-307. Cf. the poet's own experience as related in *Prelude*, iv. 231-55, 323-30.

206-7. his spirit drank The spectacle etc.] Note the physical metaphor; cf. Book IV. 1265, "Thus deeply drinking-in the soul of things", and *To my Sister*, 27-8:

Our minds shall drink at every pore  
The spirit of the season.

248-50. A direct transcript, surely, from the experience of the youth Wordsworth: the poems he wrote as a schoolboy, and still more *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*, show the pervading influence of Milton upon his mind and ear. v. notes on these poems, Vol. I, and cf. Addendum, p. 362 *supra*.

253-4. For what W. thought of Mathematics v. *Prelude*, v. 56-140, and vi. 115-28.

266. sweet influence] Cf. "The Pleiades . . . Shedding sweet influence", *Paradise Lost*, vii. 375.

326. such travellers find their own delight] Cf. ii. 19-24.

341. much did he see of men] "At the risk of giving a shock to the prejudices of artificial society, I have ever been ready to pay homage to the aristocracy of nature; under a conviction that vigorous human-heartedness is the constituent principle of true taste. It may still, however, be satisfactory to have prose testimony how far a Character, employed for purposes of imagination, is founded upon general fact. I, therefore, subjoin an extract from an author who had opportunities of being well acquainted with a class of men, from whom my own personal knowledge emboldened me to draw this portrait.

"We learn from Caesar and other Roman Writers, that the travel-

ling merchants who frequented Gaul and other barbarous countries, either newly conquered by the Roman arms, or bordering on the Roman conquests, were ever the first to make the inhabitants of those countries familiarly acquainted with the Roman modes of life, and to inspire them with an inclination to follow the Roman fashions, and to enjoy Roman conveniences. In North America, travelling merchants from the Settlements have done and continue to do much more towards civilizing the Indian natives, than all the missionaries, papist or protestant, who have ever been sent among them.

"It is farther to be observed, for the credit of this most useful class of men, that they commonly contribute, by their personal manners, no less than by the sale of their wares, to the refinement of the people among whom they travel. Their dealings form them to great quickness of wit and acuteness of judgment. Having constant occasion to recommend themselves and their goods, they acquire habits of the most obliging attention, and the most insinuating address. As in their peregrinations they have opportunity of contemplating the manners of various men and various cities, they become eminently skilled in the knowledge of the world. *As they wander, each alone, through thinly-inhabited districts, they form habits of reflection and of sublime contemplation.* With all these qualifications, no wonder, that they should often be, in remote parts of the country, the best mirrors of fashion, and censors of manners; and should contribute much to polish the roughness, and soften the rusticity of our peasantry. It is not more than twenty or thirty years since a young man going from any part of Scotland to England, of purpose *to carry the pack*, was considered as going to lead the life and acquire the fortune of a gentleman. When, after twenty years' absence, in that honourable line of employment, he returned with his acquisitions to his native country, he was regarded as a gentleman to all intents and purposes."—Heron's *Journey in Scotland*, vol. i, p. 89.—W. W.

345-7. Cf. *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*, 1800: "Low and rustic life was generally chosen, because, in that situation, the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language; because in that situation our elementary feelings coexist in a state of greater simplicity, and, consequently, may be more accurately contemplated, and more forcibly communicated."

370-1. afford to suffer *etc.*] *The Tempest*, i. ii. 5-6:

O, I have suffer'd

With those that I saw suffer.

Cf. W.'s remark about Coleridge, quoted in Barron Field's "Memoirs of the Life and Poetry of W. W." (B.M. MS. Add. 41325-7): "It was poor dear Coleridge's constant infelicity that prevented him from being the poet that Nature had given him the power to be. He had always too much personal and domestic discontent to paint the

**381-93.** v. note to 435 *infra*.

**422-33.** For this portrait of the Pedlar W. made several fragmentary sketches, which are jotted down in the *Alfoxden* note-book (date Jan. 20-March 5, 1798). The most interesting are as follows:

Transfigured by his feeling, he appeared  
Even as a prophet—one whose purposes  
Were round him like a light—sublime he seem'd,  
One to whom solitary thought had given  
The power miraculous by which the soul  
Walks through the world that lives in future things.

**513-19.** These lines first became part of *The Ruined Cottage* in

MS. E, but a draft of them followed by another few lines about Margaret is found among fragments of blank verse in MS. 2 of *Peter Bell* (date 1799–1800):

She was of quiet mood,  
Tender and deep in her excess of love,  
Not speaking much, pleased rather with the joy  
Of her own heart. By some especial care *etc.*, as text  
. . . Should live on earth a life of happiness.

Her person and her face  
Were homely, such as none who pass her by  
Would have remembered, yet when she was seen  
In her own dwelling place a grace was hers  
And Beauty which beginning from without  
Fell back on her with sanctifying power.

546. And their place knew them not] Cf. *Paradise Lost*, vii. 144: "Whom their place knows here no more." Both passages derive from Psalm ciii. 16.

593. deepest noon] Cf. *The Waggoner*, 6: "In silence deeper far than that of deepest noon."

703. "trotting brooks"] From Burns, *Epistle to William Simpson*, xv: "Adoun some trotting burn's meander"; quoted by W. at the end of his first note on *The River Duddon* (Vol. III, p. 504).

708. bladed grass] Cf. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, i. i. 211.

792. (*app. crit.*) The alteration here with its reversal of accent in the fourth foot was clearly made to strengthen the metrical effect of the line. Cf. variants at ii. 400 and 500, and v. 857 and 989; and v. note to i. 51 *supra*.

846–7. (*app. crit.*) The change in the text has been made to get rid of "towards" as a disyllable. Cf. *app. crit.* to ii. 586, 636–8, iv. 396, 862, *etc.* Mr. T. Hutchinson showed (*Academy*, Dec. 2, 1893) that W. first regarded this word as a disyllable, but from 1836 onwards used it invariably as a monosyllable. Even as early as 1814 he often used it as a monosyllable, spelling it "t'ward", or "t'wards" in the first edition of *The Excursion*.

871–916. These lines, the first written of *The Excursion* according to W. (v. I. F.), were quoted by S. T. C. in his letter of June 1797, and Mary Hutchinson had a copy of them. v. D. W. to M. H., March 5, 1798. The poem originally ended here.

916. Last human tenant] The significance of the words "human tenant" is impoverished by the withdrawal from the text of the earlier passage, in MS. B, 361–3, describing the *non-human* tenants of the Cottage—the wild colt, unstalled heifer, and Potter's Ass.

917–56. For Wordsworth's earlier attempt at a final reconciling passage v. *supra*, p. 400.

934–40. (*app. crit.*) no longer read The forms of things with an unworthy eye] A new significance is given to these words by the first

placing of this passage in MS. B (*q.v. supra*, p. 390), 366-7 *app. crit.*, as an afterthought immediately following the lines which describe the desolate and ugly spectacle of the *rank spear-grass* and rotting nettles, symbols of neglect and decay (MS. B, 357-9). Seen in another mood the spear-grass is an image of beauty and tranquillity.

934-55. Note that the changes in the text of this passage were made as late as 1845. Possibly W. was moved by the charge brought against him by John Wilson in his chapter on Sacred Poetry in *Recreations of Christopher North*, publ. 1842, where he designates W.'s religion as "a very high religion", but "not Christianity", and illustrates his point from the Story of Margaret, quoting the above lines and deploring "the utter absence of Revealed Religion where it ought to have been all-in-all".

## BOOK II

It seems likely that Book II was composed as a whole, though not in its final form, in the summer of 1806, but some parts of it were written earlier. Lines 1-26, originally intended as an opening for *Prelude*, viii, were composed in the spring of 1804 (*v. Prel.*, E. de S., p. xxxviii).

A fair copy of the whole Book is found in MS. P (*v. p. 410 supra*). An early draft of the Book down to l. 725, together with a draft of ll. 741-62 on a separate page, is found in MS. X of *The Prelude*; *v. Prel.*, E. de S., p. xxiii. I refer to the variants it supplies as X in my *app. crit.* In MS. 58 (*v. p. 371 supra*) are found ll. 153-320, in a version intermediate between MS. X and MS. P. This last version, which I refer to as MS., corresponds closely with the printed text, though with some variants.

These MSS. make it clear that Book II as first conceived lacked two significant ingredients of the printed version: (1) the details of the story of the old man lost on the mountains, ll. 730-895 (*v. notes infra*); and (2) the facts of the Solitary's marriage and loss of his wife and children, ll. 185-210 (*v. note infra*), an addition to the Solitary's history made by W. after the death of his own two children in 1812 (*v. introductory note to Book III*).

p. 42. 25-7. (*app. crit.*) Cf. note to i. 435 (*app. crit.*) *supra*.

41-6. Expert and pompous *réchauffé* of rejected passage in Book I *v. app. crit.* i. 415-22: "He lov'd them all chickens and household dogs . . .", etc. Note that the passage is a later addition to Book II, not present in the MSS.

92-6. mountains stern and desolate . . . with aerial softness clad] The suggestion of the contrast between mountains that are stern and desolate at close quarters, but fair with "aerial softness clad" when seen from a distance, comes perhaps from Dyer's *Grongar Hill*:

As yon summits soft and fair,  
Clad in colours of the air

Which to those who journey near  
Barren, brown, and rough appear.

It is to be noted that "aerial" is an epithet applied by Dyer to the sides of Cader Ydris (*Fleece*, Book III). Cf. W.'s sonnet on Dyer and note, Vol. III, pp. 10 and 421-2.

112. dark hill] i.e. Lingmoor Fell.

185-210. It is to be remarked that these lines do not appear either in X or in the draft of ll. 152-320 in MS. 58 referred to above. They occur in MS. P, M. W.'s fair copy, in a long passage written on pages which have been sewn into the book to replace earlier version removed; v. the introductory note to Book III, *infra*.

210-309. The whole of this passage should be compared with the account W. gives in *The Prelude* of his own experiences of the French Revolution.

231. regions opposite as heaven and hell] Cf. *Prelude*, x. 337-8.

314-15. "a world Not moving to his mind."] Nowell Smith has traced this quotation to George Dyer's *Lines on Gilbert Wakefield*.

320. dreary plain] Cf. *Paradise Lost*, i. 180: "Seest thou yon dreary Plain."

327-48. This passage is quoted by W. in his *Guide to the Lakes*, prefaced by the words: "The scene in which this small piece of water (Blea Tarn) lies suggested to the Author the following description, supposing the spectator to look down upon it, not from the road, but from one of its elevated sides."

373-93. Cf. D. W.'s account of a Grasmere funeral in her *Journal* of Sept. 3, 1800: "I then went to a funeral at John Dawson's. About 10 men and 4 women. Bread, cheese, and ale. They talked sensibly and cheerfully about common things. The dead person, 56 years of age, buried by the parish. The coffin was neatly lettered and painted black, and covered with a decent cloth. They set the corpse down at the door; and, while we stood within the threshold, the men with their hats off sang with decent and solemn countenances a verse of a funeral psalm. The corpse was then borne down the hill, and they sang till they had passed the Town-End. I was affected to tears while we stood in the house, the coffin lying before me. There were no near kindred, no children. When we got out of the dark house the sun was shining, and the prospect looked so divinely beautiful as I never saw it. It seemed more sacred than I had ever seen it, and yet more allied to human life. The green fields, neighbours of the churchyard, were as green as possible; and, with the brightness of the sunshine, looked quite gay. I thought she was going to a quiet spot, and I could not help weeping very much. When we came to the bridge, they began to sing again, and stopped during four lines before they entered the churchyard." And see also her account of the funeral of the Greens, in her narrative *George and Sarah Green*, p. 56 (Oxford, 1936): "The funeral procession was very solemn—passing through

Easedale, and, altogether, I never witnessed a more moving scene. As is customary here, there was a pause before the bodies were borne through the Church-yard Gate, while part of a psalm was sung, the men standing with their heads uncovered."

381-2. *Shall in the grave . . . faithfulness?*] From metrical Version of Psalm lxxviii. 11.

443. a novel of Voltaire] i.e. *Candide. ou l'Optimisme* (1759).

484. dull product of a scoffer's pen] Hazlitt and Lamb, among others, have criticized W. for this description of *Candide*. In his review of *The Excursion* in *The Examiner* Hazlitt remarked: "We cannot agree that *Candide* is dull. It is, if our Author pleases, 'the production of a scoffer's pen', or it is anything, but dull"; and at Haydon's "immortal dinner", as Haydon reports, "'Now', said Lamb, 'you old Lake poet, you rascally poet, why do you call Voltaire dull?' We all defended Wordsworth, and affirmed there was a state of mind when Voltaire would be dull." But Lamb himself, writing to W. in Sept. 1814, had said, "I dared say you never could relish *Candide*. I know I tried to get through it about a twelvemonth since, and couldn't for the dullness." But W. seems to have meditated changing "dull" to "vile"; v. *app. crit.*

500. (*app. crit.*) The correction is clearly made to enliven the dull metrical effect of the line.

550-2. Many precious rites *etc.*] Cf. I. F. note, quoted in note to v. 671.

692. two huge peaks] The Langdale Pikes, Pike of Stickle and Harrison Stickle; they are not actually visible from the cottage.

738-826. he, whom this our cottage *etc.*] "The account given by the Solitary toward the close of the second Book, in all that belongs to the character of the Old Man, was taken from a Grasmere Pauper, who was boarded in the last house quitting the vale on the road to Ambleside; the character of his hostess, and all that befell the poor man on the mountain, belong to Paterdale; the woman I knew well; her name was Ruth Jackson, and she was exactly such a person as I describe. The ruins of the old Chapel, among which the old man was found lying, may yet be traced, and stood upon the ridge that divides Paterdale from Boardale and Martindale, having been placed there for the convenience of both districts. The glorious appearance disclosed above and among the mountains was described partly from what my friend Mr. Luff, who then lived in Paterdale, witnessed upon that melancholy occasion, and partly from what Mary and I had seen in company with Sir G. and Lady Beaumont above Hartshope Hall on our way from Paterdale to Ambleside."—I. F.

W. first heard the story here related during his excursion with Dorothy on the banks of Ullswater in Nov. 1805. Here is Dorothy's version of it: "Looked down into Boar Dale above Sanwick—deep and bare, a stream winding down it. After having walked a consider-

able way on the tops of the hills, came in view of Glenridding and the mountains at the head of Grisdale. Luff then took us aside, before we had begun to descend, to a small ruin, which was formerly a Chapel, or place of worship where the inhabitants of Martindale and Patterdale were accustomed to meet on Sabbath days. There are now no traces by which you could distinguish that the building had been different from a common sheepfold; the loose stones and the few which yet remain piled up are the same as those which lie elsewhere on the mountain; but the shape of the building being oblong is not that of a common sheepfold, and it stands east and west. Whether it was ever consecrated ground or not I do not know; but the place may be kept holy in the memory of some now living in Patterdale; for it was the means of preserving the life of a poor old man last summer, who, having gone up the mountain to gather peats together, had been overtaken by a storm, and could not find his way down again. He happened to be near the remains of the old Chapel, and, in a corner of it, he contrived, by laying turf and ling and stones in a corner of it from one wall to the other, to make a shelter from the wind, and there he sate all night. The woman who had sent him on his errand began to grow uneasy towards night, and the neighbours went out to seek him. At that time the old man had housed himself in his nest, and he heard the voices of the men, but could not make himself heard, the wind being so loud, and he was afraid to leave the spot lest he should not be able to find it again, so he remained there all night; and they returned to their homes, giving him up for lost; but the next morning the same persons discovered him huddled up in the sheltered nook. He was at first stupefied and unable to move; yet after he had eaten and drunk, and recollected himself a little, he walked down the mountain, and did not afterwards seem to have suffered."

741-62. A first draft of these lines appears in MS. X, on a blank page, between passages of *Prelude*, vii and viii. They appear to have been written later than the main draft of ii. 1-725 which occupies the last pages of the note-book.

### BOOK III

The first rough draft was written in 1806, and a fair copy perhaps early in 1810 (v. p. 371 *supra*). But this version must have differed in one respect from the final text. I have already noted (v. note to ii. 185-210) that lines of Book II, which briefly recount the marriage of the Solitary and his loss of wife and children, were not in the original text; similarly all that part of Book III which deals at greater length (ll. 539-679) with the same theme

appears to be a late addition, and no part of W.'s original conception of the Solitary's life and character. W. was led to imagine personal bereavement as a leading contributory cause of his despondency by his own passionate grief at the loss of his two children, Catharine in June 1812, and Thomas in the following December. There is much in the text, and especially in the first draft of these added passages (v. especially *app. crit.* l. 638 and ll. 645-9), to corroborate this—the loss of first the girl, by a sudden illness, and then the boy, the inclusion in the draft of the lines previously written about Catharine (v. *Characteristics of a Child Three Years Old*) but put into the past tense, the ages of the children (the Solitary had been married seven years when the blow fell upon him: Thomas W. was six when he died and Catherine four), the allusion to the boy's delight in playing in the churchyard (v. *app. crit.* 645-9 and *Maternal Grief* 67-72, and cf. D. W.'s letter to Mrs. Cookson [*M.Y.*, p. 529]: "his life latterly has been connected with the churchyard in the most affecting manner—there he played daily amongst his schoolfellows, and daily tripped through it to school"); whilst the death of the mother through the effects of grief is paralleled in the constant apprehensions of both Dorothy W. and the poet as to Mary's state of health. Cf. *M.Y.*, pp. 533, 529: "All this I could bear to see in another . . . but in her case it must be struggled against or it will destroy her. When Catharine died she was terribly shaken; for her body was not strong enough to bear up against the shock of the mind, and that corroding sorrow that followed. She was beginning to recover when this second shock came, and now she seems more feeble than ever. . . . I would not have us stay here (in Grasmere) if it were possible to do otherwise, for though she bears up with the greatest fortitude, I am sure that from the weakness of her body she would sink under depression of spirits, and her constitution would be slowly undermined." On Jan. 5, 1813, D. W. wrote to Mrs. Clarkson: "William has begun to look into his poem *The Recluse* within the last two days and I hope he will be the better for it. . . . It would have pitied the hardest heart to witness what he has gone through." On the blank page of a draft letter to Lord Lonsdale, dated Jan. 8, 1813, W. has written a first sketch of lines 584-98 of *Exc.* Book III. It was surely to this book that W. turned at the time, and made the addition to the Solitary's experience. As they stand in the draft (v. *app. crit.* 539-660) the lines bear evidence of their origin in deep personal emotion, but not emotion recollected in tranquillity so much as a hurried effusion with which to ease his passion, like the stanzas poured out soon after the loss of his brother John in 1805. Their later drastic revision cut out much that was hastily written, or too personal, as well as too discursive and out of proportion to the general scheme of the poem. This revision must have been among the latest in his preparation of the poem for press.

p. 75. 17-20. A fragment of an early draft of this passage runs as follows:

... Sequestered though it be with jealous care  
Is slenderly endowed, a little gem  
Which might by no incurious search be miss'd;  
But if discover'd and once seen 'tis then  
Seen to the heart and thoroughly possess'd:  
So saying round he look'd. . . .

69-73. For the image cf. Appendix B, IV. i, lines written in 1798.

93. timid lapse] "lapse" for the fall of streams is part of W.'s inheritance from Milton; v. *Paradise Lost*, viii. 263 "liquid Lapse of murmuring streams", and W.'s *The River Duddon*, xx. 4, and *Exc.* viii. 331 and note.

112. Lost in unsearchable eternity] Since this paragraph was composed, I have read with so much pleasure, in Burnet's "Theory of the Earth", a passage expressing corresponding sentiments, excited by objects of a similar nature, that I cannot forbear to transcribe it.

"Siquid verò Natura nobis dedit spectaculum, in hâc tellure, verè gratum, et philosopho dignum, id semel mihi contigisse arbitror; cùm ex celsissimâ rupe speculabundus ad oram maris Mediterranei, hinc æquor cæruleum, illinc tractus Alpinos prospexi; nihil quidem magis dispar aut dissimile, nec in suo genere, magis egregium et singulare. Hoc theatrum ego facilè prætulerim Romanis cunctis, Græcisve; atque id quod natura hîc spectandum exhibet, scenicis ludis omnibus, aut amphitheatri certaminibus. Nihil hîc elegans aut venustum, sed ingens et magnificum, et quod placet magnitudine suâ et quâdam specie immensitatis. Hinc intuebar maris æquabilem superficiem, usque et usque diffusam, quantum maximum oculorum acies ferri potuit; illinc disruptissimam terræ faciem, et vastas moles variè elevatas aut depressas, erectas, propendentes, reclinatas, coacervatas, omni situ inæquali et turbido. Placuit, ex hâc parte, Naturæ unitas et simplicitas, et inexhausta quædam planities; ex alterâ, multiformis confusio magnorum corporum, et insanæ rerum strages: quas cùm intuebar, non urbis alicujus aut oppidi, sed confracti mundi rudera, ante oculos habere mihi visus sum.

"In singulis ferè montibus erat aliquid insolens et mirabile, sed præ cæteris mihi placebat illa, quâ sedebam, rupes; erat maxima et altissima, et quâ terram respiciebat, molliori ascensu altitudinem suam dissimulabat: quâ verò mare, horrendum præceps, et quasi ad perpendicularum facta, instar parietis. Præterea facies illa marina adeò erat lævis ac uniformis (quod in rupibus aliquando observare licet) ac si scissa fuisset à summo ad imum, in illo plano; vel terræ motu aliquo, aut fulmine, divulsa.

"Ima pars rupis erat cava, recessusque habuit, et saxeos specus,

euntes in vacuum montem; sive naturâ pridem factos, sive exesos mari, et undarum crebris ictibus: In hos enim cum impetu ruebant et fragore, æstuantis maris fluctus; quos iterum spumantes reddidit antrum, et quasi ab imo ventre evomuit.

"Dextrum latus montis erat præruptum, aspero saxo et nudâ caute; sinistrum non aded neglexerat Natura, arboribus utpote ornatum: et prope pedem montis rivus limpidæ aquæ prorupit; qui cùm vicinam vallem irrigaverat, lento motu serpens, et per varios mæandros, quasi ad protrahendam vitam, in magno mari absorptus subito periit. Denique in summo vertice promontorii, commodè eminebat saxum, cui insidebam contemplabundus. Vale augusta sedes, Rege digna: Augusta rupes, semper mihi memoranda!"—Page 89. *Telluris Theoria sacra*, etc. *Editio secunda*.—W.

133. A Druid cromlech] W.'s interest in Druid remains goes back to his schooldays; v. *The Vale of Esthwaite*, l. 32 and note (Vol. I, pp. 270 and 368).

240. With the American] K., in illustration of this passage, quotes from Falkner's *Description of Patagonia and the adjoining parts of South America* (1774): "They believe that their good deities made the world, and that they first created the Indians in their caves, gave them the lance, the bow and arrows, and the stone bowls, to fight and hunt with, and then turned them out to shift for themselves."

277–80. This is the plea of Spenser's Despayre, *F.Q.* i. ix. 40.

325–34. (*app. crit.*) purpureal sunshine] Cf. *Laodamia*, 106–8.

367–405. This passage occurs in a long desultory poem, never published by W., entitled *The Tuft of Primroses*, which he wrote in the spring of 1808. It will be found in Appendix C to this volume, p. 354 (v. ll. 265–96). W. seems first to have intended the passage for Book V; v. line 16 *app. crit.*

401–3. (*app. crit.*) Note the beautiful reading of C, unfortunately not adopted.

403. seasons' difference] From *As You Like It*, II. i. 6.

532–49. The scenery here described, with its smooth lonely downs, green winding tracks, and sylvan combs is that of the Quantocks, which W. and D. W. delighted in at Alfoxden. v. D. W.'s letter Aug. 14, 1797; *E.L.*, p. 170.

549/50. (*app. crit.*) shading pencil] From *Paradise Lost*, iii. 509.

598–9. (*app. crit.*) The Spartan monarch] "Agesilaus among other had this special property, that he loved his children dearly; and a tale goeth of him, that he would play with them in his house when they were litle ones, and ride upon a litle cocke horse, or a reed, as on horsebacke: insomuch as a friend, taking him one day with the manner, playing among his children, he prayed him to say nothing, til he had litle children himself."—North's *Plutarch*.

617. progress] The reading of MS. and all the texts before 1850; with K., I take "process" to be a printer's error.

638 and 645-9. (*app. crit.*) some of the rejected lines of these passages appeared in the poem *Maternal Grief*, q.v. (Vol. II, p. 51, and note, p. 477).

669. heavy change] *Lycidas*, 36.

701. Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way] W. had already used this line in *The Borderers* (l. 1775). Lamb remembered it in his tender thought of the young chimney-sweeper when, as a child himself, he "pursued him in imagination as he went sounding on through so many dark stifling caverns": *Praise of Chimney Sweepers*.

720-2. A reference to the spectacle described in ii. 820-81. Line 720 is repeated from ii. 832.

726. the tree of Liberty] K. notes that the Jacobins planted the first tree of Liberty in Paris in 1790. During the American War of Independence trees had been planted as symbols of freedom.

744 (*v. app. crit.*) "burned" is clearly W.'s correction. He distinguished *burned* preterite from *burnt* past participle. Cf. *Written after the death of Charles Lamb*, 61, where the earlier reading should have been restored (Vol. IV, p. 274).

774. fiercer zealots] i.e. the Jacobins. Cf. *Prelude*, x, and notes.

776. As Brutus did to virtue] "Cf. Dion Cassius, xlvii. 49, where Brutus is represented as quoting this saying of Heracles (from an unknown source):

ὦ τλήμων ἀρετή, λόγος ἄρ' ἦσθ', ἐγὼ δέ σε  
ὡς ἔργον ἡσκουν. σὺ δ' ἄρ' ἐδούλευες τύχη.

Poor virtue! So thou wert after all a mere idea, while I practised thee as a reality; but thou wert Fortune's slave all the while."—(Nowell Smith.)

815. Which now, as infamous, I should abhor] *Paradise Lost*, iv. 392: "To do what else, though damnd, I should abhorre."

827. In Britain ruled a panic dread of change] Cf. *Prel.*, E. de S. (A text), x. 646-57 and note, p. 583.

928-40. Cf. lines 208-13 of a passage written for *The Prelude*, but rejected (*Prel.*, E. de S., p. 558).

931. Of Mississippi, etc.] "A man is supposed to improve by going out into the *World*, by visiting *London*. Artificial man does; he extends with his sphere; but, alas! that sphere is microscopic; it is formed of minutiae, and he surrenders his genuine vision to the artist, in order to embrace it in his ken. His bodily senses grow acute, even to barren and inhuman pruriency; while his mental become proportionally obtuse. The reverse is the Man of Mind: he who is placed in the sphere of Nature and of God, might be a mock at Tattersall's and Brooks's, and a sneer at St. James's: he would certainly be swallowed alive by the first *Pizarro* that crossed him:—But when he walks along the river of Amazons; when he rests his eye on the unrivalled Andes; when he measures the long and watered savannah; or contemplates, from a sudden promontory, the distant, vast Pacific

—and feels himself a freeman in this vast theatre, and commanding each ready produced fruit of this wilderness, and each progeny of this stream—his exaltation is not less than imperial. He is as gentle, too, as he is great: his emotions of tenderness keep pace with his elevation of sentiment; for he says, ‘These were made by a good Being, who unsought by me, placed me here to enjoy them.’ He becomes at once a child and a king. His mind is in himself; from hence he argues, and from hence he acts, and he argues unerringly, and acts magisterially; his mind in himself is also in his God; and therefore he loves, and therefore he soars.”—From the notes upon “The Hurricane”, a Poem, by William Gilbert.

The Reader, I am sure, will thank me for the above quotation, which, though from a strange book, is one of the finest passages of modern English prose.—W.

931. that northern stream] i.e. the St. Lawrence.

947. The melancholy Muccawiss] i.e. the Whip-poor-will (*v.* variant quoted in *app. crit.*), a popular name in U.S.A. and Canada for a species of goatsucker (*O.E.D.*). W. owed his knowledge of the bird to Carver's *Travels in N. America* (1772): “The Whipperwill, or as he is called by the Indians, the Muckawiss, acquires its name by the noise it makes” (Carver). K. “entertains no doubt that W. first of all met with the name of this bird, whip-pow-will, in Waterton's *Wanderings in S. America*”, but Waterton's book was not published till 1825. W. refers to the whip-poor-will again in *A Morning Exercise*, 16 (Vol. II, p. 124).

## BOOK IV

There is no complete consecutive MS. of this Book. Lines 1–331 are not found in any extant note-book, but drafts of most of the remainder, in separate groups of lines, not in the order in which they were finally published, and generally without connecting links, survive in a note-book, MS. 58, already referred to (*v.* prefatory note, p. 371 *supra*). Since this note-book was subsequently used for early drafts of passages of Book II, it is clear that Book IV was largely conceived before Book II was completed, and the first draft of many important passages probably date from 1806. Other passages forming the basis of ll. 1150–1295 are found in a later MS., MS. 60 probably written in 1809–10, though some of these look like fair copies of earlier drafts. But perhaps the most interesting of all date back to a much earlier period, 1797–1800. And this is not surprising, since in this Book W. draws together the central ideas of his philosophy, rising to the “highth of his great argument”. *v.* prefatory note on Chronology of *Exc.*, p. 369 *supra*, and notes to ll. 332–72, 402–12, 763–5, 958–68, 1158–87, 1204–97, and 1207 *infra*.

p. 110. 2–3. commenced in pain, In Pain commenced] an obvious

imitation of the common Miltonic repetition; cf. *Paradise Lost*, ii. 7-8, 598-9, 1021-2; iii. 153-4, etc.

111. visionary powers] Cf. *Prelude*, ii. 311: "Thence did I drink the visionary power."

114-9. An allusion to the Wanderer's youthful experiences as described in i. 117-48. Cf. also W.'s own, as described in *Prelude*, iv. 320-30.

123. Those fervent raptures are for ever flown] Cf. *Tintern Abbey*, 83-5, and *Prelude*, xii. 280-2.

130-1. an easy task Earth to despise] See, upon this subject, Baxter's most interesting review of his own opinions and sentiments in the decline of life. It may be found (lately reprinted) in Dr. Wordsworth's "Ecclesiastical Biography".—W.

In C. W.'s *Ecclesiastical Biography*, published 1810 (Vol. V, p. 585), is found this extract from Part I of Richard Baxter's *Narrative of the most memorable Passages of his Life and Times*: "I find it comparatively very easy for me to be loose from the world, but hard to live by faith above. To despise earth is easy to me; but not so easy to be acquainted and conversant in heaven. I have nothing in this world which I would not easily let go; but to get satisfying apprehensions of the other world is the great and grievous difficulty."

136. 'tis a thing impossible to frame, etc.] Cf. *Convention of Cintra*: "The passions of men . . . do immeasurably transcend their objects. The true sorrow of humanity consists in this;—not that the mind of man fails but that the course and demands of action and of life so rarely correspond with the dignity and intensity of human desires."

205-6. Alas! . . . time] This subject is treated at length in the Ode *Intimations of Immortality*.—W.

245-50. Cf. *When to the attractions of the busy world*, 61-6, 98-110. Vol. II, pp. 121-2.

266. Could ere, etc.] W.'s alteration of the word order in 1845 was clearly due to his wish to avoid a rhyme-ending. Cf. note to i. 51 *supra*.

293-4. Wisdom of her sons, etc.] Matthew xi. 19.

305-19. These lines were applied by D. W. in a letter to Mrs. Clarkson, to the attitude of the Government to Napoleon in April 1815: "If they had exercised half the understanding and zeal which the wicked have shewn in conducting their plots, things could never have been in this state. Refer to the 4th Book of the *Excursion*, and you will find an admirable comment upon the conduct of the allies from beginning to end."—(M.Y., p. 663.)

324-31. Knowing the heart of man is set to be, etc.] The passage quoted from Daniel is taken from a poem addressed to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland, and the two last lines, printed in italics, are by him translated from Seneca.<sup>1</sup> The whole poem is very

<sup>1</sup> Barron Field called W.'s attention to this in a letter dated Sept. 15,

beautiful. I will transcribe four stanzas from it, as they contain an admirable picture of the state of a wise Man's mind in a time of public commotion.

"Nor is he moved with all the thunder-cracks  
Of tyrant's threats, or with the surly brow  
Of Power, that proudly sits on others' crimes;  
Charged with more crying sins than those he checks.  
The storms of sad confusion that may grow  
Up in the present for the coming times,  
Appal not him; that hath no side at all,  
But of himself, and knows the worst can fall.

"Although his heart (so near allied to earth)  
Cannot but pity the perplexed state  
Of troublous and distressed mortality,  
That thus make way unto the ugly birth  
Of their own sorrows, and do still beget  
Affliction upon Imbecility:  
Yet seeing thus the course of things must run,  
He looks thereon not strange, but as fore-done.

"And whilst distraught ambition compasses,  
And is encompassed, while as craft deceives,  
And is deceived: whilst man doth ransack man,  
And builds on blood, and rises by distress;  
And th' Inheritance of desolation leaves  
To great-expecting hopes: He looks thereon,  
As from the shore of peace, with unwet eye,  
And bears no venture in Impiety.

"Thus, Lady, fares that man that hath prepared  
A rest for his desires; and sees all things  
Beneath him; and hath learned this book of man,  
Full of the notes of frailty; and compared  
The best of glory with her sufferings:  
By whom, I see, you labour all you can  
To plant your heart! and set your thoughts as near  
His glorious mansion as your powers can bear."—W.

332-72. A first draft of this passage written for *The Recluse*, Book I, is found in MS. R. v. note to *The Recluse*, i. 502-4 (*app. crit.*), Appendix A, p. 478, *infra*.

387. "feathery bunch"] Nowell Smith traced this quotation to *The Favorite Village* (1800) of James Hurdis (1763-1801, Professor of Poetry at Oxford 1793). His other poems were *The Village Curate* (1788) and *Tears of Affliction* (1792). He is described in the *D.N.B.* as "a friend of Cowper, of whom he was at best a pale imitation".

1837, where he gives the sentence from Seneca: "O quam contempta res est homo, nisi suprà humana se erexerit!"

394. A stray passage in MS. 58 was perhaps intended to follow here:

Enlivening thoughts

On this aerial voyager attend;  
By sympathy the wasted Spirits feel  
Soft renovations of admiring love,  
And boundless sovereignty participate  
Of innocent pleasures.

402-12. A draft of this passage occurs in MS. Y of *The Prelude* (Prel., E. de S., p. 562). In the I. F. note to *To Joanna W.* writes: "There is in *The Excursion*, an allusion to the bleat of a lamb thus re-echoed and described, without any exaggeration as I heard it on the side of Stickle Tarn, from the precipice that stretches on to Langdale Pikes."

459. their clang] Cf. *Paradise Lost*, vii. 421-2.

489-504. In W.'s Commonplace Book of 1800 Thomas Wilkinson has written after the passage which suggested *The Solitary Reaper* (v. Vol. III, p. 445) the following: "But take courage, return to thy Father, rise with the lark, climb the summits of thy surrounding Hills, roll the Stone in thunder from the mountain, and follow with all thy might the Wild Goats of Ben Vorlach, so shalt thou return weary to thy Cottage, and thy rest will be as quiet as mine."

505-7 (*app. crit.*), 536-41 (*app. crit.*). It will be seen that Queen's College copy of *Exc.* 1814, a first issue, of which I know no other example, agrees with the MS. in omitting the poet's intervention 506-39, and in giving to the Wanderer the whole speech 418-549.

536-8. The language is clearly reminiscent of Shakespeare, cf. *King Lear*, III. ii. 1-16 and *Troilus and Cressida*, I. iii. 92-8.

602. "the dreadful appetite of death"] No critic, so far as I am aware, has yet been able to trace this quotation.

637. Cf. *P.L.* xii. 629: "Gliding meteorous as Ev'ning Mist."

653-4. blaze of light Or cloud of darkness] Cf. *P.L.* iii. 377-80.

686-7. That Belus, from his nightly couch Descending] K. notes that W. is here indebted to Herodotus, I. 182, where he speaks of the temple of Belus: "On the topmost tower there is a spacious Temple, and inside the Temple stands a couch of unusual size, richly adorned, with a golden table by its side. There is no statue of any kind set up in the place. . . . The Chaldaeans, the priests of this god, declare—but I, for my part, do not credit it—that the God comes down nightly into this chamber and sleeps upon the couch" (tr. Rawlinson).

699. The planetary five] Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, called by W. "Mercuries" because they carry the "decrees and resolutions of the Gods" (704). In speaking of the heavenly bodies the Wanderer, who in youth had

Gazed upon that mighty orb of song,  
The divine Milton, (i. 249-50)

inevitably becomes Miltonic in phrasing. Cf. *P.L.* x. 655-7:

To the blanc Moon  
Her office they prescrib'd; to th' other five  
Thir planetarie motions,

and *P.L.* vi. 6: "light and darkness in perpetual round".

719. sounding shores] Cf. *Lycidas*, 154, "shores and sounding seas"; and *Hymn*, 182, "the resounding shore".

745-50. Take, running river, take these locks of mine, *etc.*] Bishop Wordsworth directed K. to Pope's note on *Iliad*, xxiii. 175 as W.'s probable source here: "It was the custom of the ancients not only to offer their own hair, but likewise to consecrate that of their children to the river-gods of their country. This is what Pausanias shows in his Attica. Before you pass the Cephissus, says he, you find the tomb of Theodorus, who was the most famous actor of his time for tragedy; and, on the banks you see two statues, one of Mnesimachus, and the other of his son, who cut off his hair in honour of the rivers: for that this was in all ages the custom of the Greeks, may be inferred from Homer's poetry, where Peleus promises by a solemn vow to consecrate to the river Sperchius the hair of his son, if he returns safe from the Trojan war." Both Pope's Homer and Thomas Taylor's translation of Pausanias (1794) were in W.'s library.

753-62. Leigh Hunt, reviewing Keats's 1817 volume in the *Examiner*, noted how deeply Keats was influenced in his attitude to Greek mythology by W.'s treatment of it in this book of *The Excursion* (718-62; 847-87). The influence of these lines (753-62) upon the *Ode to the Nightingale*, vii is similarly evident. In B. R. Haydon's copy of *The Excursion*, now in the library of Cornell University, Haydon has written against lines 858-64: "Poor Keats used always to prefer this passage to all others."

763-5. We live by admiration, *etc.*] First found in a passage rejected from *Prelude*, viii (*v. Prel.*, E. de S., p. 553):

Two feelings have we also from the first  
[     ?     ] of grandeur and of tenderness;  
We live by admiration and by love  
And even as these are well and wisely fixed  
In dignity of being we ascend.

Neither in the MSS. nor in any of the texts published in W.'s lifetime is there any authority for the reading adopted by Dowden of "widely" for "wisely" in l. 764. Cf. also passage quoted from another MS. (*Prel.*, E. de S., p. 594):

While he regulates  
His notions of the beautiful and grand  
In him will admiration be no weak  
Fantastic quality, that doth betray  
Its owner, but a firm support, a source  
Perennial of new faculties and powers.

800-5 The Shepherd lad, etc.] Cf. *Henry VI, Part 3*, II. v. 21-5:

O God! methinks it were a happy life,  
To be no better than a homely swain;  
To sit upon a hill, as I do now,  
To carve out dials quaintly, point by point,  
Thereby to see the minutes how they run, etc.

847-87. Barron Field compared these lines with Boileau:

Là, pour nous enchanter, tout est mis en usage;  
Tout prend un corps, une âme, un esprit, un visage.  
Chaque vertu devient une divinité:  
Minerve est la prudence, et Venus la beauté;  
Ce n'est plus la vapeur qui produit le tonnerre,  
C'est Jupiter armé pour effrayer la terre:  
Un orage terrible aux yeux des matelots,  
C'est Neptune en courroux qui gourmande les flots:  
Echo n'est plus un son qui dans l'air retentisse,  
C'est une nymphe en pleurs, qui se plaint de Narcisse.

910-11. Saint Fillan . . . Saint Anne . . . Saint Giles] Saints who were all specially revered in Scotland. St. Anne was the mother of the Virgin Mary; St. Fillan an Irish saint who came as a missionary to Scotland in the eighth century; Bruce is said by Boece to have attributed his success at Bannockburn to "the aid of God and St. Fillan . . ."; St. Giles was a Greek who settled in France and founded a Benedictine society there. He was the patron of cripples because he refused himself to undergo a cure for lameness, preferring to mortify the flesh. The parish church of Edinburgh was dedicated to him, and his arm-bone was among the church relics.

956. laughter at their work in heaven] Cf. *Paradise Lost*, xii. 59, "great laughter was in heaven", at the "presumption" of the builders of the Tower of Babel and their discomfiture.

958-68. if 'twas ever meant, etc.] Originally part of the Wanderer's discourse at the close of *The Ruined Cottage*; v. Addendum to MS. B, ll. 58-68, p. 402 *supra*.

975. fearfully devised] Psalm cxxxix. 14, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made."

1132-40. I have seen A curious child] When malicious gossip attributed to W. the remark that Southey's poetry was "not worth five shillings a ream", Landor retorted by attacking W. for "clapping into his pouch" his simile of the sea-shell (v. *A Satire upon Satirists*, 284 *et seq.*). In the I. F. note to *Evening Voluntaries*, x. Wordsworth commented: "I was not a little surprised when I heard Mr. Landor had denounced me as a plagiarist from himself for having described a boy applying a sea-shell to his ear, and listening to it for intimation of what was going on in its native element. This I had done myself

scores of times, and it was a belief among us that we could know from the sound whether the tide was ebbing or flowing." The passage in Landor is *Gebir*, i. 120-7:

But I have sinuous shells, of pearly hue  
 Within, and they that lustre have imbibed  
 In the sun's palace porch; where, when unyoked  
 His chariot wheel stands midway in the wave.  
 Shake one, and it awakens; then apply  
 Its polished lips to your attentive ear,  
 And it remembers its august abodes,  
 And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.

Landor published a destructive criticism of W. in *An Imaginary Conversation between Southey and Porson* in Blackwood's *Edinburgh Magazine*, Dec. 1842. Quillinan replied, without W.'s knowledge, in a *Dialogue between Walter Savage Landor and the Editor of Blackwood's Magazine*, published in the same magazine, April 1843, where he defended W. from "the imputed plagiarism" in the matter of the shell. Landor made some amends in his *Imaginary Conversation between Archdeacon Hare and Walter Landor*, published 1853: "Truly he [Wordsworth] owes me little. My shell may be the prettiest on his mantelpiece; but a trifle it is at best."

1158-87. Two holograph passages in MS. 60 which appear to be copied from earlier drafts form the basis of these lines:

- (1) Come ye that are disturb'd, this steady voice  
 Of streams, the stillness and the stiller sound  
 Shall awe you into peace, this gleaming lake  
 These glistening Cottages and hoary fields  
 And in the midst above and underneath  
 Shadowy recesses, bosoms, gloomy Holds  
 Viewless, impenetrable, infinite  
 And tranquil as the abyss of deepest sleep  
 Or that dark world the untroubled home of death.  
 Lo in the west a solemn sight, behold  
 Upon yon craggy barrier's lofty ridge  
 A Pageantry of darksome trees that stand  
 Single in their aerial solitude,  
 Stand motionless in solitary calm  
 Yet greeted gently by the moving clouds  
 That pass and pass, and ever are to come  
 Varying their colours slowly in the light  
 Of an invisible moon. Cloud follows cloud  
 As thought [ ? succeeds ] to thought, but now ensues  
 A pause—the long procession seems to end,  
 The breeze that was in heaven hath died away

And all things are immoveably composed  
 Save here and there an uncomplying Star  
 That twinkles in its station self-disturbed.

(2) The second passage corresponds with ll. 1158-70 and 1177-87 with variants as in *app. crit.* The passage in *app. crit.* at 1185 is a later working up of the closing lines of (1).

1173-4. rills . . . inaudible by daylight] Cf. *An Evening Walk* (A) 433-4, and note (Vol. I, p. 332).

1175-87. Cf. D. W.'s Journal for July 27, 1800: "After tea we rowed down to Loughrigg Fell . . . The lake was now most still, and reflected the beautiful yellow and blue and purple and grey colours of the sky. We heard a strange sound in the Bainriggs wood, as we were floating on the water; it *seemed* in the wood, but it must have been above it, for presently we saw a raven very high above us. It called out, and the dome of the sky seemed to echo the sound. It called again and again as it flew onwards, and the mountains gave back the sound, seeming as if from their center; a musical bell-like answering to the bird's hoarse voice. We heard both the call of the bird, and the echo, after we could see him no longer." v. also I. F. notes to *Evening Voluntaries*, vii (Vol. IV, p. 396) and W. W.'s letter to Mrs. Clarkson, Dec. 1814 (*M.Y.*, p. 619).

1204-97. An early draft (v. I. F. Note) of this passage was written in 1798 as part of the discourse of the Pedlar at the end of *The Ruined Cottage* (v. Addendum to MS. B, p. 400 *supra*). From this passage S. T. C. quotes the first 18 lines in a letter to his brother George, dated April 1798, introducing W.'s lines to clinch his own views, which are stated thus: "I devote myself to such works as encroach not on the anti-social passions—in poetry, to elevate the imagination and set the affections in right tune by the beauty of the inanimate impregnated as with a living soul by the presence of life. . . . I love fields and woods and mountains with almost a visionary fondness. And because I have found benevolence and quietness growing within me as that fondness has increased, therefore I should wish to be the means of implanting it in others and to destroy bad passions not by combating them but by keeping them in inaction."

1207. inarticulate language] In the *Alfoxden* MS., a note-book used by W. between Jan. 20 and Mar. 5, 1798, there are what appear to be first jottings for the passage in MS. B referred to in the preceding note (v. note to II. ii, Appendix B, *infra*, p. 479).

1264. (*first draft*, lines 57-76, v. p. 402) This majestic imagery . . . Affections, organs, passions] These lines were obviously indebted to two of Hamlet's speeches. Cf. II. ii. 318-27: "This most excellent canopy the air, look you, this brave and overhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in

form, in moving, how express and admirable!—in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god!" and iv. iv. 33-9.

1268-9. strict necessity] For the thought cf. ix. 87 and note. The phrase is from Milton, *Paradise Lost*, v. 528.

1270-4 (*v. app. crit.*). I have restored to the text line 1272: 'The humblest functions of corporeal sense,' omitted, I believe by mistake, in 1845. The line stands clearly written in identical revised versions of this passage intended for *ed.* 1845, one in W.'s own hand in C, the other in M. W.'s hand in Q.

## BOOK V

A fair copy of this book survives, written by M. W. in MS. 61. There are also rough drafts of most of it, which show that it underwent much re-handling. The first two hundred lines were probably written before the end of 1806 (*v. prefatory note*, p. 371 *supra*), but the main composition must belong to the second period of writing beginning in the winter of 1809-10 (*v. p. 371-2 supra*).

p. 153. 16. (*app. crit.*) What impulse drove the Hermit . . .] *v. note* to iii. 367-405.

28/9. (*app. crit.*) sounding shores] *v. note* to iv. 719.

75-6. as a billow . . . sea] Barron Field criticized this simile as retirement "to anything but solitude and a covert, back to the ocean of life!" W. replied: "I cannot accede to your objection to the billow. The point simply is, he was cast out of his element and falls back into it, as naturally and necessarily as a billow into the sea. There is imagination in fastening solely upon that characteristic point of resemblance—stopping there, thinking of nothing else!" (*L.Y.*, p. 313.)

77-91. As the I. F. note (*supra*, p. 376) explains, the scene is now transferred, "as by the waving of a magic wand", from Little Langdale to Grasmere. But the "tufted trees" (81) which screened the church-tower had disappeared in 1807; *v. D. W.*'s letter to Mrs. Clarkson, July 19 (*M.Y.*, p. 138): "All the trees in Bainriggs are cut down, and even worse, the giant sycamore near the parsonage house, and all the finest trees that overtopped the steeple tower."

80-3. The phraseology is from Milton *v. L'Allegro*, 77-8:

Towers and Battlements it sees  
Boosom'd high in tufted trees.

96. A popular equality reigns here] Cf. *Prelude*, ix. 215-27.

141-3. A grateful coolness fell, *etc.*] *v. Lamb's letter* to W. of Aug. 9, 1814: "One feeling I was particularly struck with as what I recognised so very lately at Harrow Church on entering in it after a hot and secular day's pleasure,—the instantaneous coolness and calming, almost transforming, properties of a country church just entered—a certain fragrance which it has—either from its holiness,

or being kept shut all the week, or the air that is let in being pure country—exactly what you have reduced into words but I am feeling I cannot."

264-73. In a note-book MS. 61 containing a rough draft of the bulk of Book V these lines are preceded by ll. 1-77 of the passage quoted below, which has been pieced together from pages of the same note-book. It is clear from the manner in which it is related to the final text that the passage was first written as a long speech of the Solitary, voicing his conception of a typical peasant's life, but it was never revised and was ultimately rejected as disproportionate. Some of the reflections are incorporated in the final text: cf. ll. 309-35 with v. 391-410, and ll. 344-57 with v. 431-9. The delightful picture of the peasant boy, of which ll. 150-65 *infra* are supplied from a stray sheet of another MS., seems to have been the germ of the whole. Lines 221-308 (To the Yoke . . . dreams) are also found in another note-book MS. 62<sup>a</sup> of which most of the contents appear in the 1815 volumes: this suggests that W. may have intended at that time to include the lines in these volumes as a fragment on a peasant's courtship and married life. The references in the right-hand margin are to *Excursion*, Book V.

"While here I stand

And cast my eyes around these still abodes,  
One I behold which hath to-day been filled  
By a poor friendless Man—an aged Orphan (885-6)  
5 So call him, for humanity to him  
No parent was,—the rest to me are mute,  
I know no more what tenant each contains  
Than doth the grass (sod) that roofs it.—Yet, methinks,  
If mere imagination might presume  
10 To touch a theme that wants the steadier light  
Of your experience—might I step before,  
And with no better guide than chance regards  
Or notice forced upon incurious ears, (418)  
Attempt an honest sample to set forth  
15 Of those by doom of nature hither brought  
From their sequestered Cottages—a race  
Thrice favoured, uncorrupted men, who share  
The elevation of a Christian land,  
A land of peace and liberty and truth,  
20 Thus would I paint him—thus from morn to eve  
From life's dim opening to its last decay  
Would I retrace his history." At these words  
A sudden influx of enlivening thought  
Brightened the sick man's faded countenance.

15-21 Of Nature's rustic offspring, here interred,  
Thus from life's opening, etc. (*other draft*)

- 25 My expectation shaped for him a path  
 On the plain ground inscribed, but his discourse  
 Mounted aloft, and under many a cloud,  
 And crossing many a streak of ether blue,  
 Sailed high or low upon the inconstant wind  
 30 Part wheeling, blown about in part—with bold  
 And not ungraceful struggles—"Let the house  
 (Thus buoyantly did that discourse ascend)  
 Where first he breathes the vital air be glad!  
 For a Manchild is born. See weakness now  
 35 Impersonated here in human form,  
 Assert her rights, and helplessness ensure  
 From eager tendance all that it requires.  
 Beneath the lowly (naked) rafters of the roof  
 That shelters him, supine the (the breathing) Infant lies,  
 40 Senseless and powerless, yet a King of State,  
 Of high observance and of prime concern,  
 And every eye that enters turns to him  
 Not less than if he were the destined Lord  
 Of large domains, exultingly announced  
 45 With church-tower music rung in clamorous peal.  
 Stooping as needs she must, let Fancy tell,  
 But why? Though versed in sciences occult,  
 Prognostics, tokens, planetary sway  
 And fireside omens, far as skill can go,  
 50 What tongue, for this occasion competent,  
 May trace the lore through all its curious maze,  
 Or note the spells, the forms that must be kept  
 Strictly, or not less scrupulously shunned,  
 As each sage Gossip dictates, to protect,  
 55 For the unconscious object of their care  
 And regent of their busy services,  
 Body and mind from evil, and ensure  
 A length of days by fortune's sunshine cheered.  
 Nor fail their garrulous tongues to interpose  
 60 Brief words of ready prayer for honest ways,  
 And God's good grace to aid and crown the whole.  
 Meanwhile how pure or exquisite the bliss  
 That from the touch or sensible approach  
 Of her new Acquisition shall pervade  
 65 The languid Mother's heart, what yearning love  
 What tender awe or pious gratitude  
 To the still spirit may convey delight  
 And lift it in this Sabbath of her rest (Prelude, v. 261)  
 Above the level of life's daily course,

43-5 The star unseen before that now hath risen. (other draft)

- 70 This is a mystery—a saintly lamp  
Burns here within its own peculiar shrine,  
Forbid to blend its light with common day.  
Due honour will the ensuing months obtain  
If we record that like his Brother Babes
- 75 Cradled in palaces, this Cottage nursling  
Learn'd in that tedious time to yawn, smile, sneeze,  
Though yet irrational of soul to grasp  
With tiny finger—to let fall a tear ; (265)  
And, as the heavy cloud of sleep dissolves,
- 80 To stretch his limbs, bemocking, as might seem  
The outward functions of intelligent Man ;  
A grave proficient in amusive feats  
Of puppetry, that from the lap declare  
His expectations, and announce his claims
- 85 To that inheritance which millions rue  
That they were ever born to ! (273)
- 87 So let our Rustic child, a freight in arms,  
Go forth besprinkled with their flattering [ ? dews],  
Nor be the jocund Peasants harshly judged
- 90 If that abode to which they turn, whose hearth  
Glows like a furnace with the festal flame  
Ere the day's light be wasted, shall resound  
With boisterous merriment and jests impure,  
Which even the Mother, whom her natural stress
- 95 Did lately fling upon a stiller shore,  
Is now not unprepared to greet with smiles  
Of arch complacency, or at least receive  
Without an altered cheek. With these to teach,  
Restrain him, fashion, foster, and inure,
- 100 The Peasant Boy from leading strings is freed  
And from the Go-cart's moving Prison escapes,  
Running and struggling wheresoe'r his feet  
Can totter with him,—on the perilous edge  
Of tempting fire, or deep and sullen pool,
- 105 Or rain-swoln flood that near the Cottage roars  
And harms him not ; for stray where'er he will,  
Approving by the event the Mother's creed  
Confidingly received from age to age,  
Heaven's tender care protects him through all risks.
- 110 Risen with the Sun's first rising in the East,  
And to his aery loft and couch of straw  
Dismiss'd not seldom ere the sun retires,  
A day of many-weathered hours he sees
- 72 And may not mingle with the common day (*other draft*)

- Neglected, humoured, scolded, and caressed.  
 115 But health of body, strength, and prosperous growth,  
 Thanks to fresh air and hardy liberty,  
 He for himself provides, and though so late  
 Of tendance due deprived, and those nice arts  
 Which ease and opulence are free to give  
 120 Or purchase, he a firmer aspect shows  
 Than his coevals of more high degree.  
 Yet mark the recompense, no longer now  
 By teasing incapacities detained  
 And burthensome through helplessness, how soon,  
 125 Matched with these ornaments of wealthier flower,  
 Hath he outstripped them all. Robust of limb,  
 Bright-eyed and rosy cheeked, to my mind's eye  
 I represent him such as once I marked  
 In springtime sporting on the threshold step  
 130 And where the plot of weedless pavement fronts  
 The door not often closed; and as I passed,  
 Calling to mind the wan uncoloured face  
 Which, in the mother's arms, mine eyes had seen  
 With some slight touch of pitiful regard,  
 135 Encountered while dark winter chilled the plains,  
 The florid Youngling which I now beheld  
 With the warm light of April on his cheek  
 Or basking on his hair, exposed like leaves  
 Or clustering blossoms, to my thought appeared  
 140 Less like a Creature, heretofore oppressed,  
 Whose state had undergone a balmy change,  
 Than one created on that sunny day.  
 Such he, so fair, and to the passing eye  
 As rich in promise; what if yon low pile  
 145 Yon ancient edifice with fern-clad roof  
 Where now upon his form, through half the day  
 In durance seated, he a primer cons  
 117-21 . . . and though the course  
 Of pressing tasks which scanty means enjoin  
 Full soon deprived him of that tendance strict  
 Which on his first consignment to the world  
 Nature exacted for him, with some help  
 By vain officious novelty supplied,  
 And hence his lot has been to lag behind,  
 In thriving infant loveliness surpassed  
 By his coevals of more high degree, (*other draft*)  
 145-8 Within whose walls, methinks, I see him sit,  
 Conducting, to and fro, deliberate eyes  
 Of close regard along the primer's page,  
 Or thumbing earnestly a holier book (*other draft*)

- With poring eyes, or thumbs a holier book,  
 Of his advancement make no proud report,  
 150 Yet in the glad hours when restraint hath ceased  
 The fields accept him as their genuine growth;  
 Sauntering he plays upon his sycamore pipe  
 Or with his Mates at the earliest season's call  
 Hies to some orchard-ground or household croft  
 155 Where blow the splendid daffodils of March  
 And from that bed his rusty hat entwines  
 With golden wreath—the plunderers ye may track  
 Each to his home. Their garland is dispersed  
 Almost as soon as woven—the gay spoil  
 160 So late in bunches proudly grasped is now  
 Slighted as burthensome, or only prized  
 As matter for destruction—leaves and stalks  
 Flung here and there bestrew the path and road,  
 To the brisk Traveller or to him who walks  
 165 Musing with downcast eyes a notice bright  
 But pensive, that the flowering Spring is come.  
 Nor will the musing Traveller reprove  
 The wanton mischief or deplore the waste  
 Of inoffensive beauty from such source  
 170 Proceeding; and hereafter, if the Thrush  
 Or mother Linnet in her hopeful nest  
 Be subject to worse injury, for the Bird  
 He grieves, regrets his loss, but spares meanwhile  
 That overnice humanity which would brand  
 175 Their enterprize and pleasure-seeking ways  
 Who ignorant of the law that calls forth [sin]  
 In pure activity of rustic childhood  
 Do range about rejoicing, while that joy  
 Is yet allowed them in that law's despite.  
 180 Hark what an uproar in the hills, and see—  
 Nay, do not smile—('Tis Fancy that must see  
 By virtue of her own creative eye  
 And Fancy's ear must listen to the sound)  
 Behold a fragment down the rugged breast  
 185 Of the steep mountain bounding, and aloft  
 Mark the bold hero of my tale, whose pains,  
 At length unsettling in its antient seat  
 The mass, hath sent it headlong from the brink  
 Of the steep mountain's dizzy eminence  
 190 Thundering and smoking, ploughing the green turf  
 Shattering and shatter'd. With delight sublime  
 By apprehension [? driv'n] the Boy surveys  
 189 Down the steep mountain's long declivity (*other draft*)

- The ungovernable motion ; with the speed  
 Of Thought he calculates, divines its course,  
 195 Assigns its period while the timid sheep  
 All unendangered, far and near disperse  
 With trepidations innocent and wild,  
 Not pacified though in the pool below  
 Already the huge block hath found repose,  
 200 Echo is hushed, and silence hath returned.  
 Thus undepraved by labour in excess  
 Imposed, or premature, and unappalled  
 By ghastly Poverty, the Peasant lad  
 Thrives, and exhibits in his homely wits  
 205 A flattering miniature of native man  
 Unruly, daring, active, indolent,  
 But sometimes not without a short-lived zeal  
 To useful services, but happiest then  
 When danger tempts him,—nay with serpent eye  
 210 Enthralls and fascinates ; or when mischief pleads,  
 Restless ambition's advocate and guide.  
 His days are happy—think not so, no days  
 Of human life with happiness are blest,  
 But his are fraught with pleasures manifold,  
 215 Nor destitute of Nature's grace, a wild  
 And generous dignity. But livelier joy  
 Awaits his riper Station ; the fresh breath  
 Of Independence eagerly assumed,  
 The first pure relish of life's personal cares,  
 220 And the free earnings of his sinewy arms,  
 To his own use for purposes applied  
 By his own will, these glittering novelties  
 With store of self-applause for shrewdness, pains,  
 Or steadiness applied before their time,  
 225 And mightier far than these, love rushing in  
 With perturbation. To the yoke he bends  
 Receives the chain from Nature's conquering hand  
 Not loth, nor sad, but inwardly rejoiced,  
 Like the thrilled Blackbird whistling in the grove,  
 230 Or lordly Eagle in the rocky wild,  
 By force of all-commanding Love sublime.  
 The stripling's day shews little, by that light  
 You cannot read him ; into the hours of rest  
 His spirit's course of action overflows.  
 235 No ghost familiar with the night like him,  
 To this new service bound, his fervent zeal  
 The liveliest star outwatches, in mid heaven  
 Fixed, or slow travelling on the horizon's bound.

- Happy if she for whom he wakes abide  
 240 Within the limits of his native vale,  
 The native vale of both, a common Home;  
 And not less happy if, need be, the Youth  
 Posts over hill and dale and mountain top,  
 Through wood and brook, across by shortest line  
 245 Hasting, and chiding oft the watry clouds  
 Which the sky breeds to blind his eager steps.  
 What sundry shapes of hazard, paths obscure  
 And length of indefatigable march,  
 Ere at the door the soft low tap be given,  
 250 Or from beneath the cottage eaves ascends  
 The stifled Cough, warning his chosen friend  
 That now, when sleep has hushed the world, he comes  
 For a brief taste of stealthy intercourse.  
 Ten thousand sparks do from this covert fire  
 255 Spring up at each incitement of the breeze  
 Vivid though noiseless,—blessed hours if doubt  
 Be not, and jealousy, but hours they are.
- But Time has wings, and Pleasure is Time's Slave,  
 He must depart, ere blush of morning's light,  
 260 With the far-wandering fox slink to his home  
 For short repose, or haply to commence  
 A long day's labour with the sun now risen.
- Each current stemmed of adverse circumstance,  
 The rock of absence either shunned or touched  
 265 Without a fatal shock, the uncertain shoals  
 Of jealousy triumphantly escaped,  
 And fancy's crosswinds, and her peevish squalls  
 All stoutly weathered, the trim vessel holds  
 Her port in open view. It dawns, the day,  
 270 The important day of lasting recompense,  
 Not unproceeded by a throng of caros,  
 Of frugal preparation intermixed  
 With inoffensive vanity and show.
- And see the orb, that animates the earth  
 275 And cheers the frame and fills the spirit of man  
 With genial thoughts, upon that morning shine  
 In splendour, so that hill and dale reflect  
 The satisfaction of the festive troop  
 As they advance, or from the Church return;  
 280 Blithe company of Elders, Maids, and Youths,  
 And the blest pair for life's remaining course  
 Each given to each, indissolubly bound.
- This natural wedlock yields in season due  
 Fair fruit, most precious to the mother's heart

285 From the first hour, and to the Father's heart  
 Doubly endeared, soon as the tender Babe  
 By creeping years is strengthened to endure  
 Rough fondness, and the gaiety of love  
 In boisterous assault. Then ere he quits  
 290 His home, or as he enters from the fields,  
 Lightly the vigorous Peasant at arm's length  
 Tosses his lusty Boy aloft in air  
 And laughs to see the laughing child at once  
 Pleased and half frightened (daunted) by the dizzy height  
 295 Gain'd in a moment, in a moment lost.

A seasonable gladness, a relief  
 Occasional for six laborious days  
 Is here prepared, and duly this resource  
 Sweetens the day of leisure and repose  
 300 With innocent pastime. In a sheltered vale,  
 Far from the gross contagion of the world,  
 Thus are the earlier years of wedded life  
 Adorned as Spring with flowers, and more to uphold  
 The Pair, and favor them as they advance,  
 305 In later time, along their humble path,  
 The Pitfalls of mistake they shall avoid  
 By Prudence guarded, whose sure hand shall heal  
 The hurts of unavoidable mischance,  
 Immoderate Labour shall not sap their strength  
 310 Nor sickness overturn their plans, or thwart;  
 Discord shall find no place by their fire-side,  
 Nor shall the dread of Poverty oppress  
 Their waking thoughts, nor guilt disturb their dreams.

Ah, what avails it? in the life of Man,  
 315 If to the Poetry of common speech (391-)  
 Faith may be given, we see as in a glass,  
 A true reflection of the arching year  
 With all its seasons. Grant that Spring is there  
 Hopeful and promising with buds and flowers,  
 320 Yet where is glowing Summer's long rich day,  
 That ought to follow, faithfully expressed?  
 And mellow Autumn charged with bounteous fruits  
 Where is she imaged, in what favored soil  
 Her lavish pomp and ripe magnificence?  
 325 Yet while the better part is missed, the worse  
 In Man's autumnal season is set forth  
 With a resemblance not to be denied, (405)

305/6 Oh! could a wish of mine avail, this Pair  
 Should prove as blest as some whose [ ? ]  
 The pitfalls, etc. but with should for shall throughout (other draft)

- And that contents him,—bowers that hear no more  
 The voice of gladness, less and less supply  
 330 Of outward sunshine and internal warmth,  
 And, with this change, they pass, and falling leaves,  
 Forerunning total Winter, blank and cold,  
 Form his torn wreath. Admit that restless hours  
 Revel and strife, and trembling eagerness,  
 335 And fitful gleams, and thriftless promises,  
 And hope, blithe hope, triumphant in the main,  
 Spring's natural Virtue and her dear delight,—  
 That these are all familiar to our youth,  
 Yet where is glowing Autumn's long rich day, (398)  
 340 That ought to follow, faithfully expressed ?  
 Spare then regret, misplace not your contempt,  
 If with no happier fate than others, born  
 Of Fortune's pure advantages, and reared  
 With Learning's boasted aid, this shepherd swain,  
 345 Albeit in Christian principles not unschooled,  
 And with an ear not ignorant of the threat  
 Denounc'd, the promise and the high command,  
 Do in his noiseless solitude partake  
 Man's general lot ; and lead a life whose course  
 350 Is fashioned like an ill-constructed Tale, (432)  
 That in the outset wastes its gay desires,  
 Its fair adventures and its lively hopes  
 And pleasant interests. Thus far, step by step,  
 That life I have retraced ; and what remains,  
 355 What proof doth Manhood bring that now a scheme  
 Is rounded and complete, a promise kept,  
 A height attained, a noble growth matured ?  
 Day follows day, and year succeeds to year,  
 Old things repeating with diminished grace,  
 360 And all the high-prized novelties, at best  
 Imperfect substitutes, whose use and power  
 Evince the want or weakness whence they spring. (439)  
 See for the gushing fount's continuous stream  
 The toiling engine's interrupted gifts,  
 365 Or joyless cistern's hoard, that fears the sun.  
 The sail that caught the help of every wind,  
 The sail abandoned for the creeping oar.  
 And on the basis of some goodly pile  
 Insensibly decayed, or with harsh hand  
 370 Demolished and subverted utterly,  
 Unsightly structure reared with needless pains.  
 Why look with nearer view ? enough that he  
 Who, when a child, among the flowery fields

- 375      Conspers'd, not lacking either eye or soul,  
          With Nature's beauty, on the dizzy height  
          Who stood in fearlessness a shepherd lad  
          And nursed the daring appetite of power,  
          Who skimmed the hills and dales as if on wings  
 380      A youthful Lover, and who, lastly, gained,  
          Following as no unworthy passion led,  
          A Husband's calm assurances, and reaped  
          The tender first-fruits of a Father's love,  
          That he, for all that to himself pertains  
          Of brief enjoyment, dignity, or power  
 385      Already ere the middle stage of life  
          Be passed, nay, fairly reached, doth walk the earth  
          In degradation. Man has breathed too long.  
          Ask of thyself, thou proud One of the world,  
          If this be not thy doom in life, than him  
 390      [      ?      ] and in worse degree. Toil, daily toil  
          Secures his vigorous health and tranquil sleep,  
          But time and custom overpower his soul,  
          Upon the tablet the bright colours fade,  
          The Image steals insensibly away,  
 395      And leaves a meagre outline in its place,  
          A ghost, a phantom.

With lines 231-48 *supra* cf. note to Robert Anderson's *Cumberland Ballads* (first published 1805) on the peasants' courtship customs: "A Cumbrian peasant pays his addresses to his sweetheart during the silence and solemnity of midnight. Anticipating her kindness, he will travel ten or twelve miles, over hills, bogs, moors, and mosses, undiscouraged by the length of the road, the darkness of the night, or the intemperature of the weather. On reaching her habitation, he gives a gentle tap at the window of her chamber, at which signal she immediately rises, dresses herself, and proceeds with all possible silence to the door, which she gently opens, lest a creaking hinge, or a barking dog, should awaken the family. On his entrance into the kitchen, the luxuries of a Cumbrian cottage—cream and sugared curds—are placed before him. . . . Next the courtship commences, previously to which the fire is darkened or extinguished, lest its light should guide to the window some idle or licentious eye. In this dark and uncomfortable situation (at least uncomfortable to all but the lovers), they remain till the advance of day, depositing in each other's bosoms the secrets of love."

**292-308.** It is to be noted that in the earlier draft these lines are given to the Solitary, and that 309-20 were added when they were transferred to the poet himself.

**318.** If to be weak is to be wretched—miserable] From *Paradise Lost*, i. 157.

329. graze the herb] The phrase is from Milton "Grasing the tender herb", *P.L.*, iv. 253.

417. chance-regards] Cf. chance-desires, *Ode to Duty*, 38; chance-temptation, *Duddon Sonnet*, xxx. 6; chance-sunbeam, *Liberty*, 102.

455-61. To an oak, etc.] v. I. F. note, p. 375 *supra*.

489. speculative height] Cf. Cowper, *The Task*, i. 289:

Now roves the eye,  
And posted on this speculative height  
Exults in its command.

Both passages are reminiscent of Milton's "top of Speculation", *P.L.*, xii. 588-9, from which the Archangel offers Adam the monitory vision.

529. forbidding] I follow Nowell Smith in restoring the original reading, in place of "forbidden" which was printed in 1820, 1845, and 1850. "Forbidding" is clearly required by the context.

647. And have the dead around us]

"Leo. You, Sir, could help me to the history  
Of half these graves ?

Priest. For eight-score winters past,  
With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,  
Perhaps I might ; . . . .  
By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,  
We two could travel, Sir, through a strange round ;  
Yet all in the broad highway of the world."

See *The Brothers*.—W.

671. High on the breast, etc.] i.e. Hackett, above Little Langdale, and therefore not visible from Grasmere. That Hackett is referred to is confirmed by the I. F. note to *Misc. Sonnets*, I. viii (v. Vol. III, p. 420). Christopher W. has the following among his unpublished notes of W. W.'s conversation: "Betty Yewdale died this morning, Sunday, Jan. 12, 1834. She lived originally in Langdale, and was the woman who in my poem lights her husband Jonathan from the quarry. She talked the dialect of these parts in its purest and most ancient form. Much of her language is older than the Conquest."

"And now for a few words upon the Church, its Monuments, and the Deceased who are spoken of as lying in the surrounding Churchyard. But first for the one picture, given by the Pastor and the Wanderer, of the Living. In this nothing is introduced but what was taken from nature and real life. The cottage is called Hackett, and stands, as described, on the southern extremity of the ridge which separates the two Langdales; the Pair who inhabited it were called Jonathan and Betty Yewdale. Once when our children were ill, of whooping-cough I think, we took them for change of air to this cottage, and were in the habit of going there to drink tea on fine summer afternoons, so that we became intimately acquainted with

the characters, habits, and lives of these good, and, let me say, in the main, wise people. The matron had, in her early youth, been a servant in a house at Hawkshead, where several boys boarded, while I was a schoolboy there. I did not remember her as having served in that capacity; but we had many little anecdotes to tell to each other of remarkable boys, incidents and adventures which had made a noise in their day in that small town. These two persons afterwards settled at Rydal, where they both died.

*"Church and Churchyard.* The church, as already noticed, is that of Grasmere. The interior of it has been improved lately—made warmer by under-drawing the roof and raising the floor, but the rude and antique majesty of its former appearance has been impaired by painting the rafters; and the oak benches, with a simple rail at the back dividing them from each other, have given way to seats that have more the appearance of pews. It is remarkable that, excepting only the pew belonging to Rydal Hall, that to Rydal Mount, the one to the Parsonage, and I believe another, the men and women still continue, as used to be the custom in Wales, to sit separate from each other. Is this practice as old as the Reformation? and when and how did it originate? In the Jewish synagogues and in Lady Huntingdon's Chapels the sexes are divided in the same way. In the adjoining churchyard greater changes have taken place; it is now not a little crowded with tombstones; and near the school-house which stands in the Churchyard is an ugly structure, built to receive the hearse, which is recently come into use. It would not be worth while to allude to this building or the hearse-vehicle it contains, but that the latter has been the means of introducing a change much to be lamented in the mode of conducting funerals among the mountains. Now, the coffin is lodged in the hearse at the door of the house of the Deceased, and the corpse is so conveyed to the Churchyard gate: all the solemnity which formerly attended its progress, as described in the Poem, is put an end to. So much do I regret this, that I beg to be excused for giving utterance here to a wish that, should it befall me to die at Rydal Mount, my own body may be carried to Grasmere Church after the manner in which, till lately, that of every one was borne to that place of sepulture, namely, on the shoulders of neighbours, no house being passed without some words of a funeral Psalm being sung at the time by the attendants. When I put into the mouth of the Wanderer, 'Many precious rites and customs of our rural ancestry are gone, or stealing from us; this, I hope, will last for ever' [ii. 550-3], and what follows, little did I foresee that the observance and mode of proceeding, which had often affected me so much, would so soon be superseded. Having said much of the injury done to this Churchyard, let me add that one is at liberty to look forward to a time when, by the growth of the Yew Trees, thriving there, a solemnity will be spread over the place that will in some degree make amends for the

old simple character which has already been so much encroached upon, and will be still more every year. I will here set down, by way of memorial, that my Friend, Sir G. Beaumont, having long ago purchased the beautiful piece of water called Loughrigg Tarn, on the banks of which he intended to build, I told him that a person in Kendal who was attached to the place wished to purchase it. Sir George, finding the possession of no use to him, consented to part with it, and placed the purchase-money, £20, at my disposal for any local use which I thought proper. Accordingly I resolved to plant Yew Trees in the Churchyard, and had four pretty strong large oak enclosures made, in each of which was planted, under my own eye, and principally if not entirely by my own hand, two young trees, with the intention of leaving the one that throve best to stand. Many years after, Mr. Barber, who will long be remembered in Grasmere, Mr. Greenwood (the chief landed proprietor), and myself had four other enclosures made in the Churchyard at our own expense, in each of which was planted a tree taken from its neighbour, and they all stand thriving admirably, the fences having been removed as no longer necessary. May the trees be taken care of hereafter when we are all gone, and some of them perhaps at some far distant time rival in majesty the Yew of Lorton and those which I have described as growing in Borrowdale, where they are still to be seen in grand assemblage."—I. F.

824—6. Note the change in the text made in 1845, and v. note to i. 934—55.

975. And gentle Nature grieved, *etc.*] "And suffering Nature grieved that one should die."—SOUTHEY'S *Retrospect*.—W.

978. And whence that tribute? wherefore these regards?] The sentiments and opinions here uttered are in unison with those expressed in the following Essay upon Epitaphs, which was furnished by me for Mr. Coleridge's periodical work, "The Friend;" and as they are dictated by a spirit congenial to that which pervades this and the two succeeding books, the sympathising reader will not be displeased to see the Essay here annexed.<sup>1</sup>—W.

#### *Essay upon Epitaphs*

It need scarcely be said, that an Epitaph presupposes a Monument, upon which it is to be engraven. Almost all Nations have wished that certain external signs should point out the places where their dead are interred. Among savage tribes unacquainted with letters this has mostly been done either by rude stones placed near the graves, or by mounds of earth raised over them. This custom proceeded obviously from a twofold desire; first, to guard the remains of the deceased from irreverent approach or from savage violation: and, secondly, to preserve their memory. "Never any," says Camden, "neglected burial

but some savage nations, as the Bactrians, which cast their dead to the dogs; some varlet philosophers, as Diogenes, who desired to be devoured of fishes; some dissolute courtiers, as Mæcenas, who was wont to say, 'Non tumultum curo; sepelivit natura relictos'.

"I'm careless of a grave:—Nature her dead will save."

As soon as nations had learned the use of letters, epitaphs were inscribed upon these monuments; in order that their intention might be more surely and adequately fulfilled. I have derived monuments and epitaphs from two sources of feeling: but these do in fact resolve themselves into one. The invention of epitaphs, Weever, in his *Discourse of Funeral Monuments*, says rightly, "proceeded from the presage or fore-feeling of immortality, implanted in all men naturally, and is referred to the scholars of Linus the Theban poet, who flourished about the year of the world two thousand seven hundred; who first bewailed this Linus their Master, when he was slain, in doleful verses, then called of him *CElina*, afterwards *Epitaphia*, for that they were first sung at burials, after engraved upon the sepulchres".

And, verily, without the consciousness of a principle of immortality in the human soul, Man could never have had awakened in him the desire to live in the remembrance of his fellows: mere love, or the yearning of kind towards kind, could not have produced it. The dog or horse perishes in the field, or in the stall, by the side of his companions, and is incapable of anticipating the sorrow with which his surrounding associates shall bemoan his death, or pine for his loss; he cannot pre-conceive this regret, he can form no thought of it; and therefore cannot possibly have a desire to leave such regret or remembrance behind him. Add to the principle of love which exists in the inferior animals, the faculty of reason which exists in Man alone; will the conjunction of these account for the desire? Doubtless it is a necessary consequence of this conjunction; yet not I think as a direct result, but only to be come at through an intermediate thought, viz. that of an intimation or assurance within us, that some part of our nature is imperishable. At least the precedence, in order of birth, of one feeling to the other, is unquestionable. If we look back upon the days of childhood, we shall find that the time is not in remembrance when, with respect to our own individual Being, the mind was without this assurance; whereas, the wish to be remembered by our friends or kindred after death, or even in absence, is, as we shall discover, a sensation that does not form itself till the *social* feelings have been developed, and the Reason has connected itself with a wide range of objects. Forlorn, and cut off from communication with the best part of his nature, must that man be, who should derive the sense of immortality, as it exists in the mind of a child, from the same unthinking gaiety or liveliness of animal spirits with which the lamb in the meadow, or any other irrational creature is endowed; who should ascribe it, in short, to blank ignorance in the child; to an inability

arising from the imperfect state of his faculties to come, in any point of his being, into contact with a notion of death; or to an unreflecting acquiescence in what had been instilled into him! Has such an unfold of the mysteries of nature, though he may have forgotten his former self, ever noticed the early, obstinate, and unappeasable inquisitiveness of children upon the subject of origination? This single fact proves outwardly the monstrousness of those suppositions: for, if we had no direct external testimony that the minds of very young children meditate feelingly upon death and immortality, these enquiries, which we all know they are perpetually making concerning the *whence*, do necessarily include correspondent habits of interrogation concerning the *whither*. Origin and tendency are notions inseparably co-relative. Never did a child stand by the side of a running stream, pondering within himself what power was the feeder of the perpetual current, from what never-wearied sources the body of water was supplied, but he must have been inevitably propelled to follow this question by another: "Towards what abyss is it in progress? what receptacle can contain the mighty influx?" And the spirit of the answer must have been, though the word might be sea or ocean, accompanied perhaps with an image gathered from a map, or from the real object in nature—these might have been the *letter*, but the *spirit* of the answer must have been as inevitably,—a receptacle without bounds or dimensions;—nothing less than infinity. We may, then, be justified in asserting, that the sense of immortality, if not a co-existent and twin birth with Reason, is among the earliest of her offspring: and we may further assert, that from these conjoined, and under their countenance, the human affections are gradually formed and opened out. This is not the place to enter into the recesses of these investigations; but the subject requires me here to make a plain avowal, that, for my own part, it is to me inconceivable, that the sympathies of love towards each other, which grow with our growth, could ever attain any new strength, or even preserve the old, after we had received from the outward senses the impression of death, and were in the habit of having that impression daily renewed and its accompanying feeling brought home to ourselves, and to those we love; if the same were not counteracted by those communications with our internal Being, which are anterior to all these experiences, and with which revelation coincides, and has through that coincidence alone (for otherwise it could not possess it) a power to affect us. I confess, with me the conviction is absolute, that, if the impression and sense of death were not thus counterbalanced, such a hollowness would pervade the whole system of things, such a want of correspondence and consistency, a disproportion so astounding betwixt means and ends, that there could be no repose, no joy. Were we to grow up unfostered by this genial warmth, a frost would chill the spirit, so penetrating and powerful, that there could be no motions of the life

of love ; and infinitely less could we have any wish to be remembered after we had passed away from a world in which each man had moved about like a shadow.—If, then, in a creature endowed with the faculties of foresight and reason, the social affections could not have unfolded themselves uncountenanced by the faith that Man is an immortal being ; and if, consequently, neither could the individual dying have had a desire to survive in the remembrance of his fellows, nor on their side could they have felt a wish to preserve for future times vestiges of the departed ; it follows, as a final inference, that without the belief in immortality, wherein these several desires originate, neither monuments nor epitaphs, in affectionate or laudatory commemoration of the deceased, could have existed in the world.

Simonides, it is related, upon landing in a strange country, found the corse of an unknown person lying by the sea-side ; he buried it, and was honoured throughout Greece for the piety of that act. Another ancient Philosopher, chancing to fix his eyes upon a dead body, regarded the same with slight, if not with contempt ; saying, "See the shell of the flown bird !" But it is not to be supposed that the moral and tender-hearted Simonides was incapable of the lofty movements of thought, to which that other Sage gave way at the moment while his soul was intent only upon the indestructible being ; nor, on the other hand, that he, in whose sight a lifeless human body was of no more value than the worthless shell from which the living fowl had departed, would not, in a different mood of mind, have been affected by those earthly considerations which had incited the philosophic Poet to the performance of that pious duty. And with regard to this latter we may be assured that, if he had been destitute of the capability of communing with the more exalted thoughts that appertain to human nature, he would have cared no more for the corse of the stranger than for the dead body of a seal or porpoise which might have been cast up by the waves. We respect the corporeal frame of Man, not merely because it is the habitation of a rational, but of an immortal Soul. Each of these Sages was in sympathy with the best feelings of our nature ; feelings which, though they seem opposite to each other, have another and a finer connection than that of contrast.—It is a connection formed through the subtle progress by which, both in the natural and the moral world, qualities pass insensibly into their contraries, and things revolve upon each other. As, in sailing upon the orb of this planet, a voyage towards the regions where the sun sets, conducts gradually to the quarter where we have been accustomed to behold it come forth at its rising ; and, in like manner, a voyage towards the east, the birthplace in our imagination of the morning, leads finally to the quarter where the sun is last seen when he departs from our eyes ; so the contemplative Soul, travelling in the direction of mortality, advances to the country of everlasting life ; and, in like manner, may she continue to explore those cheerful tracts,

till she is brought back, for her advantage and benefit, to the land of transitory things—of sorrow and of tears.

On a midway point, therefore, which commands the thoughts and feelings of the two Sages whom we have represented in contrast, does the Author of that species of composition, the laws of which it is our present purpose to explain, take his stand. Accordingly, recurring to the twofold desire of guarding the remains of the deceased and preserving their memory, it may be said that a sepulchral monument is a tribute to a man as a human being; and that an epitaph (in the ordinary meaning attached to the word) includes this general feeling and something more; and is a record to preserve the memory of the dead, as a tribute due to his individual worth, for a satisfaction to the sorrowing hearts of the survivors, and for the common benefit of the living: which record is to be accomplished, not in a general manner, but, where it can, in *close connection with the bodily remains of the deceased*: and these, it may be added, among the modern nations of Europe, are deposited within, or contiguous to, their places of worship. In ancient times, as is well known, it was the custom to bury the dead beyond the walls of towns and cities; and among the Greeks and Romans they were frequently interred by the way-sides.

I could here pause with pleasure, and invite the Reader to indulge with me in contemplation of the advantages which must have attended such a practice. We might ruminate upon the beauty which the monuments, thus placed, must have borrowed from the surrounding images of nature—from the trees, the wild flowers, from a stream running perhaps within sight or hearing, from the beaten road stretching its weary length hard by. Many tender similitudes must these objects have presented to the mind of the traveller leaning upon one of the tombs, or reposing in the coolness of its shade, whether he had halted from weariness or in compliance with the invitation, "Pause, Traveller!" so often found upon the monuments. And to its epitaph also must have been supplied strong appeals to visible appearances or immediate impressions, lively and affecting analogies of life as a journey—death as a sleep overcoming the tired wayfarer—of misfortune as a storm that falls suddenly upon him—of beauty as a flower that passeth away, or of innocent pleasure as one that may be gathered—of virtue that standeth firm as a rock against the beating waves;—of hope "undermined insensibly like the poplar by the side of the river that has fed it," or blasted in a moment like a pine-tree by the stroke of lightning upon the mountain-top—of admonitions and heart-stirring remembrances, like a refreshing breeze that comes without warning, or the taste of the waters of an unexpected fountain. These, and similar suggestions, must have given, formerly, to the language of the senseless stone a voice enforced and endeared by the benignity of that nature with which it was in unison.—We, in modern times, have lost much of these advantages; and they are but in a

small degree counterbalanced to the inhabitants of large towns and cities, by the custom of depositing the dead within, or contiguous to, their places of worship; however splendid or imposing may be the appearance of those edifices, or however interesting or salutary the recollections associated with them. Even were it not true that tombs lose their monitory virtue when thus obtruded upon the notice of men occupied with the cares of the world, and too often sullied and defiled by those cares, yet still, when death is in our thoughts, nothing can make amends for the want of the soothing influences of nature, and for the absence of those types of renovation and decay, which the fields and woods offer to the notice of the serious and contemplative mind. To feel the force of this sentiment, let a man only compare in imagination the unsightly manner in which our monuments are crowded together in the busy, noisy, unclean, and almost grassless churchyard of a large town, with the still seclusion of a Turkish cemetery, in some remote place; and yet further sanctified by the grove of cypress in which it is embosomed. Thoughts in the same temper as these have already been expressed with true sensibility by an ingenuous Poet of the present day.<sup>1</sup> The subject of his poem is "All Saints' Church, Derby": he has been deploring the forbidding and unseemly appearance of its burial-ground, and uttering a wish, that in past times the practice had been adopted of interring the inhabitants of large towns in the country:

"Then in some rural, calm, sequestered spot,  
Where healing Nature her benignant look  
Ne'er changes, save at that lorn season, when,  
With tresses drooping o'er her sable stole,  
She yearly mourns the mortal doom of man,  
Her noblest work, (so Israel's virgins erst,  
With annual moan upon the mountains wept  
Their fairest gone,) there in that rural scene,  
So placid, so congenial to the wish  
The Christian feels, of peaceful rest within  
The silent grave, I would have stayed.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Roger Coxon has pointed out that Grosart and E. de S. were wrong in identifying this poet as John Edwards (1751-1832), a Nottingham poet born in Ireland: "The true author was John Edwards (1772-1845), liquor merchant of Derby; born at Fulneck, Moravian Settlement near Leeds, and educated there with James Montgomery, a close friend in later life." T. R. Potter writes (*The Reliquary*, vol. xi, p. 159): "Wordsworth never passed Derby on his way to Sir George Beaumont at Coleorton without calling at a respectable liquor merchant in the Iron Gate to have an hour with its owner, a brother poet, John Edwards. It was once my good fortune to see W. and Montgomery in that humble home and to hear the pleasant table-talk of three brother bards, two of whom I could not help looking at with wonder."

—wandered forth, where the cold dew of heaven  
 Lay on the humbler graves around, what time  
 The pale moon gazed upon the turfy mounds,  
 Pensive, as though like me, in lonely muse,  
 'Twere brooding on the dead inhumed beneath.  
 There while with him, the holy man of Uz,  
 O'er human destiny I sympathised,  
 Counting the long, long periods prophecy  
 Decrees to roll, ere the great day arrives  
 Of resurrection, oft the blue-eyed Spring  
 Had met me with her blossoms, as the Dove,  
 Of old, returned with olive leaf, to cheer  
 The Patriarch mourning o'er a world destroyed:  
 And I would bless her visit; for to me  
 'Tis sweet to trace the consonance that links  
 As one, the works of Nature and the word  
 Of God."—

JOHN EDWARDS.

A village churchyard, lying as it does in the lap of nature, may indeed be most favourably contrasted with that of a town of crowded population; and sepulture therein combines many of the best tendencies which belong to the mode practised by the Ancients, with others peculiar to itself. The sensations of pious cheerfulness, which attend the celebration of the sabbath-day in rural places, are profitably chastised by the sight of the graves of kindred and friends, gathered together in that general home towards which the thoughtful yet happy spectators themselves are journeying. Hence a parish-church, in the stillness of the country, is a visible centre of a community of the living and the dead; a point to which are habitually referred the nearest concerns of both.

As, then, both in cities and in villages, the dead are deposited in close connection with our places of worship, with us the composition of an epitaph naturally turns, still more than among the nations of antiquity, upon the most serious and solemn affections of the human mind; upon departed worth—upon personal or social sorrow and admiration—upon religion, individual and social—upon time, and upon eternity. Accordingly, it suffices in ordinary cases, to secure a composition of this kind from censure, that it contain nothing that shall shock or be inconsistent with this spirit. But, to entitle an epitaph to praise, more than this is necessary. It ought to contain some thought or feeling belonging to the mortal or immortal part of our nature touchingly expressed; and if that be done, however general or even trite the sentiment may be, every man of pure mind will read the words with pleasure and gratitude. A husband bewails a wife; a parent breathes a sigh of disappointed hope over a lost child; a son utters a sentiment of filial reverence for a departed father or mother;

a friend perhaps inscribes an encomium recording the companionable qualities, or the solid virtues, of the tenant of the grave, whose departure has left a sadness upon his memory. This and a pious admonition to the living, and a humble expression of Christian confidence in immortality, is the language of a thousand churchyards; and it does not often happen that anything, in a greater degree discriminate or appropriate to the dead or to the living, is to be found in them. This want of discrimination has been ascribed by Dr. Johnson, in his Essay upon the epitaphs of Pope, to two causes; first, the scantiness of the objects of human praise; and, secondly, the want of variety in the characters of men; or, to use his own words, "to the fact, that the greater part of mankind have no character at all". Such language may be holden without blame among the generalities of common conversation; but does not become a critic and a moralist speaking seriously upon a serious subject. The objects of admiration in human nature are not scanty, but abundant: and every man has a character of his own, to the eye that has skill to perceive it. The real cause of the acknowledged want of discrimination in sepulchral memorials is this: That to analyse the characters of others, especially of those whom we love, is not a common or natural employment of men at any time. We are not anxious unerringly to understand the constitution of the minds of those who have soothed, who have cheered, who have supported us: with whom we have been long and daily pleased or delighted. The affections are their own justification. The light of love in our hearts is a satisfactory evidence that there is a body of worth in the minds of our friends or kindred, whence that light has proceeded. We shrink from the thought of placing their merits and defects to be weighed against each other in the nice balance of pure intellect; nor do we find much temptation to detect the shades by which a good quality or virtue is discriminated in them from an excellence known by the same general name as it exists in the mind of another; and, least of all, do we incline to these refinements when under the pressure of sorrow, admiration, or regret, or when actuated by any of those feelings which incite men to prolong the memory of their friends and kindred, by records placed in the bosom of the all-uniting and equalising receptacle of the dead.

The first requisite, then, in an Epitaph is, that it should speak, in a tone which shall sink into the heart, the general language of humanity as connected with the subject of death—the source from which an epitaph proceeds—of death, and of life. To be born and to die are the two points in which all men feel themselves to be in absolute coincidence. This general language may be uttered so strikingly as to entitle an epitaph to high praise; yet it cannot lay claim to the highest unless other excellencies be superadded. Passing through all intermediate steps, we will attempt to determine at once what these excellencies are, and wherein consists the perfection of this species of

composition.—It will be found to lie in a due proportion of the common or universal feeling of humanity to sensations excited by a distinct and clear conception, conveyed to the reader's mind, of the individual, whose death is deplored and whose memory is to be preserved; at least of his character as, after death, it appeared to those who loved him and lament his loss. The general sympathy ought to be quickened, provoked, and diversified, by particular thoughts, actions, images,—circumstances of age, occupation, manner of life, prosperity which the deceased had known, or adversity to which he had been subject; and these ought to be bound together and solemnised into one harmony by the general sympathy. The two powers should temper, restrain, and exalt each other. The reader ought to know who and what the man was whom he is called upon to think of with interest. A distinct conception should be given (implicitly where it can, rather than explicitly) of the individual lamented.—But the writer of an epitaph is not an anatomist, who dissects the internal frame of the mind; he is not even a painter, who executes a portrait at leisure and in entire tranquillity: his delineation, we must remember, is performed by the side of the grave; and, what is more, the grave of one whom he loves and admires. What purity and brightness is that virtue clothed in, the image of which must no longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen, no—nor ought to be seen, otherwise than as a tree through a tender haze or a luminous mist, that spiritualises and beautifies it; that takes away, indeed, but only to the end that the parts which are not abstracted may appear more dignified and lovely; may impress and affect the more. Shall we say, then, that this is not truth, not a faithful image; and that, accordingly, the purposes of commemoration cannot be answered?—It *is* truth, and of the highest order; for, though doubtless things are not apparent which did exist; yet, the object being looked at through this medium, parts and proportions are brought into distinct view which before had been only imperfectly or unconsciously seen: it is truth hallowed by love—the joint offspring of the worth of the dead and the affections of the living! This may easily be brought to the test. Let one, whose eyes have been sharpened by personal hostility to discover what was amiss in the character of a good man, hear the tidings of his death, and what a change is wrought in a moment! Enmity melts away; and, as it disappears, unsightliness, disproportion, and deformity, vanish; and, through the influence of commiseration, a harmony of love and beauty succeeds. Bring such a man to the tombstone on which shall be inscribed an epitaph on his adversary, composed in the spirit which we have recommended. Would he turn from it as from an idle tale? No;—the thoughtful look, the sigh, and perhaps the involuntary tear, would testify that it had a sane, a generous, and good meaning; and that on the writer's mind had remained an impression which was a

true abstract of the character of the deceased ; that his gifts and graces were remembered in the simplicity in which they ought to be remembered. The composition and quality of the mind of a virtuous man, contemplated by the side of the grave where his body is mouldering, ought to appear, and be felt as something midway between what he was on earth walking about with his living frailties, and what he may be presumed to be as a Spirit in heaven.

It suffices, therefore, that the trunk and the main branches of the worth of the deceased be boldly and unaffectedly represented. Any further detail, minutely and scrupulously pursued, especially if this be done with laborious and antithetic discriminations, must inevitably frustrate its own purpose ; forcing the passing Spectator to this conclusion,—either that the dead did not possess the merits ascribed to him, or that they who have raised a monument to his memory, and must therefore be supposed to have been closely connected with him, were incapable of perceiving those merits ; or at least during the act of composition had lost sight of them ; for, the understanding having been so busy in its petty occupation, how could the heart of the mourner be other than cold ? and in either of these cases, whether the fault be on the part of the buried person or the survivors, the memorial is unaffecting and profitless.

Much better is it to fall short in discrimination than to pursue it too far, or to labour it unfeelingly. For in no place are we so much disposed to dwell upon those points of nature and condition, wherein all men resemble each other, as in the temple where the universal Father is worshipped, or by the side of the grave which gathers all human Beings to itself, and “equalises the lofty and the low”. We suffer and we weep with the same heart ; we love and are anxious for one another in one spirit ; our hopes look to the same quarter ; and the virtues by which we are all to be furthered and supported, as patience, meekness, good-will, justice, temperance, and temperate desires, are in an equal degree the concern of us all. Let an Epitaph, then, contain at least these acknowledgments to our common nature ; nor let the sense of their importance be sacrificed to a balance of opposite qualities or minute distinctions in individual character ; which if they do not, (as will for the most part be the case,) when examined, resolve themselves into a trick of words, will, even when they are true and just, for the most part be grievously out of place ; for, as it is probable that few only have explored these intricacies of human nature, so can the tracing of them be interesting only to a few. But an epitaph is not a proud writing shut up for the studious : it is exposed to all—to the wise and the most ignorant ; it is condescending, perspicuous, and lovingly solicits regard ; its story and admonitions are brief, that the thoughtless, the busy, and indolent, may not be deterred, nor the impatient tired : the stooping old man cons the engraven record like a second horn-book ;—the child is proud that he can read it ;—and

the stranger is introduced through its mediation to the company of a friend: it is concerning all, and for all:—in the churchyard it is open to the day; the sun looks down upon the stone, and the rains of heaven beat against it.

Yet, though the writer who would excite sympathy is bound in this case, more than in any other, to give proof that he himself has been moved, it is to be remembered, that to raise a monument is a sober and a reflective act; that the inscription which it bears is intended to be permanent, and for universal perusal; and that, for this reason, the thoughts and feelings expressed should be permanent also—liberated from that weakness and anguish of sorrow which is in nature transitory, and which with instinctive decency retires from notice. The passions should be subdued, the emotions controlled; strong, indeed, but nothing ungovernable or wholly involuntary. Seemliness requires this, and truth requires it also: for how can the narrator otherwise be trusted? Moreover, a grave is a tranquillising object: resignation in course of time springs up from it as naturally as the wild flowers, besprinkling the turf with which it may be covered, or gathering round the monument by which it is defended. The very form and substance of the monument which has received the inscription, and the appearance of the letters, testifying with what a slow and laborious hand they must have been engraven, might seem to reproach the author who had given way on this occasion to transports of mind, or to quick turns of conflicting passion; though the same might constitute the life and beauty of a funeral oration or elegiac poem.

These sensations and judgments, acted upon perhaps unconsciously, have been one of the main causes why epitaphs so often personate the deceased, and represent him as speaking from his own tomb-stone. The departed Mortal is introduced telling you himself that his pains are gone; that a state of rest is come; and he conjures you to weep for him no longer. He admonishes with the voice of one experienced in the vanity of those affections which are confined to earthly objects, and gives a verdict like a superior Being, performing the office of a judge, who has no temptations to mislead him, and whose decision cannot but be dispassionate. Thus is death disarmed of its sting, and affliction unsubstantialised. By this tender fiction, the survivors bind themselves to a sedate sorrow, and employ the intervention of the imagination in order that the reason may speak her own language earlier than she would otherwise have been enabled to do. This shadowy interposition also harmoniously unites the two worlds of the living and the dead by their appropriate affections. And it may be observed, that here we have an additional proof of the propriety with which sepulchral inscriptions were referred to the consciousness of immortality as their primal source.

I do not speak with a wish to recommend that an epitaph should be

cast in this mould preferably to the still more common one, in which what is said comes from the survivors directly; but rather to point out how natural those feelings are which have induced men, in all states and ranks of society, so frequently to adopt this mode. And this I have done chiefly in order that the laws, which ought to govern the composition of the other, may be better understood. This latter mode, namely, that in which the survivors speak in their own persons, seems to me upon the whole greatly preferable: as it admits a wider range of notices; and, above all, because, excluding the fiction which is the groundwork of the other, it rests upon a more solid basis.

Enough has been said to convey our notion of a perfect epitaph; but it must be borne in mind that one is meant which will best answer the *general* ends of that species of composition. According to the course pointed out, the worth of private life, through all varieties of situation and character, will be most honourably and profitably preserved in memory. Nor would the model recommended less suit public men, in all instances save of those persons who by the greatness of their services in the employments of peace or war, or by the surpassing excellence of their works in art, literature, or science, have made themselves not only universally known, but have filled the heart of their country with everlasting gratitude. Yet I must here pause to correct myself. In describing the general tenour of thought which epitaphs ought to hold, I have omitted to say, that if it be the *actions* of a man, or even some *one* conspicuous or beneficial act of local or general utility, which have distinguished him, and excited a desire that he should be remembered, then, of course, ought the attention to be directed chiefly to those actions or that act: and such sentiments dwelt upon as naturally arise out of them or it. Having made this necessary distinction, I proceed.—The mighty benefactors of mankind, as they are not only known by the immediate survivors, but will continue to be known familiarly to latest posterity, do not stand in need of biographic sketches, in such a place; nor of delineations of character to individualise them. This is already done by their Works, in the memories of men. Their naked names, and a grand comprehensive sentiment of civic gratitude, patriotic love, or human admiration—or the utterance of some elementary principle most essential in the constitution of true virtue;—or a declaration touching that pious humility and self-abasement, which are ever most profound as minds are most susceptible of genuine exaltation—or an intuition, communicated in adequate words, of the sublimity of intellectual power;—these are the only tribute which can here be paid—the only offering that upon such an altar would not be unworthy.

“What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones  
The labour of an age in piled stones,  
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid  
Under a star-pointing pyramid ?

Dear Son of Memory, great Heir of Fame,  
 What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?  
 Thou in our wonder and astonishment  
 Hast built thyself a livelong monument,  
 And so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,  
 That kings for such a tomb would wish to die."—W.

## BOOK VI

In two rough note-books, MSS. 60, 61, dating probably from 1809–12, are found drafts covering most of this book. But a manuscript of *The Recluse*, MS. B, written in the early months of 1800, includes the two stories found in lines 1080–191, *v. Recluse (app. crit.)* 383/4 in Appendix A, *supra*, and thus proves them to have been composed at that time. The first, and the latter half of the second, from 1150, are also preserved in another note-book in use in 1800, MS. R.

p. 186. 11. beauty of holiness] A phrase which occurs four times in the Bible—1 Chron. xvi. 29, 2 Chron. xx. 21, Ps. xxix. 2, Ps. cx. 3.

19. And spires "whose silent finger points to heaven"] An instinctive taste teaches men to build their churches in flat countries with spire-steeple, which as they cannot be referred to any other object, point as with silent finger to the sky and stars, and sometimes, when they reflect the brazen light of a rich though rainy sunset, appear like a pyramid of flame burning heavenward. See "The Friend", by S. T. Coleridge, No. 14, p. 223.—W.

95–211. "And now for the persons that are selected as lying in the Churchyard. But first for the Individual whose grave is prepared to receive him. His story is here truly related: he was a school-fellow of mine for some years. He came to us when he was at least 17 years of age, very tall, robust, and full-grown. This prevented him from falling into the amusements and games of the school; consequently he gave more time to books. He was not remarkably bright or quick, but by industry he made a progress more than respectable. His parents not being wealthy enough to send him to college, when he left Hawkshead he became a schoolmaster, with a view to preparing himself for holy orders. About this time he fell in love as related in the Poem, and everything followed as there described, except that I do not know exactly when and where he died. The number of youths that came to Hawkshead school, from the families of the humble yeomanry, to be educated to a certain degree of Scholarship as a preparation for the Church, was considerable, and the fortunes of these persons in after life various of course, and of some not a little remarkable. I have now one of this class in my eye who became an Usher in a preparatory school and ended in making a large fortune. His manners when he came to Hawkshead were as uncouth as well could be; but he had

good abilities, with skill to turn them to account; and when the Master of the School, to which he was Usher, died, he stepped into his place and became Proprietor of the Establishment. He contrived to manage it with such address, and so much to the taste of what is called High Society and the fashionable world, that no school of the kind, even till he retired, was in such high request. Ministers of State, the wealthiest gentry, and nobility of the first rank, vied with each other in bespeaking a place for their sons in the seminary of this fortunate Teacher.<sup>1</sup> In the solitude of Grasmere, while living as a married man in a cottage of £8 per annum rent, I often used to smile at the tales which reached me of the brilliant career of this quondam clown, for such in reality he was in manner and appearance before he was polished a little by attrition with *gentlemen's* sons trained at Hawkshead, rough and rude as many of our families were. Not 200 yards from the cottage in Grasmere, just mentioned, to which I retired, this gentleman, who many years afterwards purchased a small estate in the neighbourhood, is now erecting a boat-house, with an upper story, to be resorted to as an entertaining-room when he and his associates may feel inclined to take their pastime on the Lake. Every passenger will be disgusted with the sight of this Edifice, not merely as a tasteless thing in itself, but as utterly out of place, and peculiarly fitted, as far as it is observed (and it obtrudes itself on notice at every point of view), to mar the beauty and destroy the pastoral simplicity of the Vale. For my own part and that of my household it is our utter detestation, standing by a shore to which, before the highroad was made to pass that way, we used daily and hourly to repair for seclusion and for the shelter of a grove under which I composed many of my poems, *The Brothers* especially, and for this reason we gave the grove that name.

That which each man loved  
And prized in his peculiar nook of earth  
Dies with him, or is changed. [i. 471-3.]

So much for my old school-fellow and his exploits. I will only add that as the foundation has twice failed, from the lake no doubt being intolerant of the intrusion, there is some ground for hoping that this impertinent structure will not stand. (It has been rebuilt in somewhat better taste and much as one wishes it away it is not now so very unsightly. The structure is an emblem of the man,—perseverance has conquered difficulties and given something of form and polish to rudeness (*added in pencil*).”—I. F.

119-20. (*app. crit.*) and pined When he had told his love] Probably altered (in 1827) so as to avoid invidious comparison with Viola in *Twelfth Night*, II. iv. 113-15, "She never told her love, But . . . pined in thought".

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Pearson *pencil note in MS.*

163. Love will not submit, etc.] Chaucer, *The Franklyn's Tale*, 36-8:

Love wol nat ben constreyned by maistrye;  
Whan maistrie comth, the god of love anon  
Beteth his winges, and farewell! he is gon!

and Spenser, *F.Q.* III. i. 25:

Ne may love be compeld by maisterie;  
For soon as maisterie comes, sweet love anone  
Taketh his nimble wings, and soone away is gone.

187. Shedding sweet influence] *Paradise Lost*, vii. 375.

212-61. "The Miner, next described as having found his treasure after twice ten years of labour, lived in Paterdale, and the story is true to the letter. It seems to me, however, rather remarkable that the strength of mind which had supported him through this long unrewarded labour, did not enable him to bear its successful issue. Several times in the course of my life I have heard of sudden influxes of great wealth being followed by derangement, and in one instance the shock of good fortune was so great as to produce absolute Idiocy. But these all happened where there had been little or no previous effort to acquire the riches, and therefore such a consequence might the more naturally be expected than in the case of the solitary Miner. In reviewing his story one cannot but regret that such perseverance was not sustained by a worthier object. Archimedes leapt out of his bath and ran about the streets proclaiming his discovery in a transport of joy, but we are not told that he lost either his life or his senses in consequence."—I. F.

260. "Unshaken, unseduced, untterrified"] : *Paradise Lost*, v. 896.

273. mixture of Earth's mould] *Comus*, 244.

275-375. "The next character, to whom the Priest is led by contrast with the resoluteness displayed by the foregoing, is taken from a person born and bred in Grasmere, by name Dawson; and whose talents, disposition, and way of life were such as are here delineated. I did not know him, but all was fresh in memory when we settled in Grasmere in the beginning of the century."—I. F.

327. the wide-staring owl] Cf. Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 927: "Then nightly sings the staring owl."

386. dividual being] *Paradise Lost*, xii. 85.

405-522. "From this point the conversation leads to the mention of two Individuals who, by their several fortunes, were, at different times, driven to take refuge at the small and obscure town of Hawkshead on the skirt of these mountains. Their stories I had from the dear old Dame with whom, as a schoolboy and afterwards, I lodged for nearly the space of ten years. The elder, the Jacobite, was named Drummond, and was of a high family in Scotland; the Hanoverian Whig bore the name of Vandepat, and might perhaps be a descendant

of some Dutchman who had come over in the train of King William. At all events his zeal was such that he ruined himself by a contest for the representation of London or Westminster, undertaken to support his party, and retired to this corner of the world, selected, as it had been by Drummond, for that obscurity which, since visiting the Lakes became fashionable, it has no longer retained. So much was this region considered out of the way till a late period, that persons who had fled from justice used often to resort hither for concealment; and some were so bold as to, not unfrequently, make excursions from the place of their retreat, for the purpose of committing fresh offences. Such was particularly the case with two brothers of the name of Weston who took up their abode at Old Brathay, I think about 70 years ago. They were highwaymen, and lived there some time without being discovered, though it was known that they often disappeared in a way and upon errands which could not be accounted for. Their horses were noticed as being of a choice breed, and I have heard from the Relph family, one of whom was a saddler in the town of Kendal, that they were curious in their saddles and housings and accoutrements of their horses. They, as I have heard, and as was universally believed, were in the end both taken and hanged."—I. F.

421. Culloden] Prince Charles and his Highlanders were routed by the Duke of Cumberland at Culloden Moor on April 16, 1745.

532-3. too quick a sense Of constant infelicity] K. has traced this quotation to Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Dying*, i. v. 2: "How many people there are that weep with want and are mad with oppression, or are desperate with too quick a sense of a constant infelicity."

544. line of Thebes] *Il Penseroso*, 99, "Thebes or Pelops line".

550-1. pomp Of circumstance] *Othello*, III. iii. 354, "Pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war."

594-8. (*app. crit.*) Cf. *Paradise Lost*, v. 185-7:

Ye mists and exhalations that now rise  
From Hill or steaming Lake, duskie or gray  
Till the Sun paint your fleecie skirts, etc.

Note that in revising the passage W. clears it of its close Miltonic phrasing.

605-10. almost wholly free, etc.] Such was Grasmere Churchyard when W. first knew it. In the I. F. note to the *Epistle to Sir G. Beaumont*—*Upon perusing the foregoing* W. speaks of it as having, "during late years, lost much of its rustic simplicity by the introduction of iron palisades, to fence off family burying-grounds, and by numerous monuments, some of them in very bad taste, from which this place of burial was in my memory quite free; see the lines in the sixth Book of *The Excursion*, beginning 'Green is the churchyard'."

678, etc. Tall was her stature, etc.] "This person lived at Town End, and was almost our next neighbour. I have little to notice concerning her beyond what is said in the Poem. She was a most striking instance

how far a woman may surpass in talent, in knowledge, and culture of mind, those with and among whom she lives, and yet fall below them in Christian virtues of the heart and spirit. It seemed almost, and I say it with grief, that in proportion as she excelled in the one, she failed in the other. How frequently has one to observe in both sexes the same thing, and how mortifying is the reflection!"—I. F. The woman was Aggy Fisher, sister-in-law of Molly, servant of the W.'s 1800-4. In D. W.'s *Journal* will be found a hint of her parsimony (May 16, 1800) and examples of her gift for conversation (June 3 and 21, 1802). She died in 1804.

766-74. (*v. app. crit.*) Note the definitely Christian addition to this passage made in 1845, and cf. note to i. 934-55.

778-9. Cf. "seats in the rude wall" of the Churchyard described in *An Evening Walk*, A. 49-52, *app. crit.* (Vol. I, p. 7).

787. "The story that follows was told to Mrs. Wordsworth and my Sister by the sister of this unhappy young woman; every particular was exactly as I have related. The party was not known to me, though she lived at Hawkshead, but it was after I left school. The Clergyman, who administered comfort to her in her distress, I knew well. Her Sister who told the story was the wife of a leading yeoman in the Vale of Grasmere, and they were an affectionate pair and greatly respected by every one who knew them. Neither lived to be old; and their Estate—which was perhaps the most considerable then in the vale, and was endeared to them by many remembrances of a salutary character not easily understood, or sympathised with, by those who are born to great affluence—passed to their eldest son, according to the practice of these Vales, who died soon after he came into possession. He was an amiable and promising youth, but was succeeded by an only brother, a good-natured man, who fell into habits of drinking, by which he gradually reduced his property; and the other day the last acre of it was sold, and his wife and children and he himself, still surviving, have very little left to live upon, which it would not perhaps have been worth while to record here but that, through all trials, this woman has proved a model of patience, meekness, affectionate forbearance, and forgiveness. Their eldest son, who, through the vices of his Father, has thus been robbed of an ancient family inheritance, was never heard to murmur or complain against the cause of their distress, and is now [1843] deservedly the chief prop of his mother's hopes."—I. F.

905. pang of despised love] *Hamlet*, III. i. 72.

919-20. He, at whose command the parched rock Was smitten] A reference to Numbers xx. 1-11.

945-51. (*app. crit.*) goodly thewes] From Spenser, *F.Q.* i. x. 4, "well upbrought In goodly thewes".

1005. Home to her mother's house] An unconscious reminiscence

of the last line of *Paradise Regain'd*: "Home to his Mother's house private return'd".

1080-191. As already noted, these two stories were written in 1800, as a part of *The Recluse*. Mr. Gordon Wordsworth was of opinion that the family described in the second of them was drawn from the Ashburners, W.'s near neighbours at Town End, to whom D. W.'s *Grasmere Journals* contain many references. Thomas Ashburner was not a widower, for he had a second wife, so that the story is in part at least imaginary or drawn from some other family.

1114. Here, it seems probable, W. intended to place the story of the Shepherd of Bield Crag. The scattered sheets of a MS. book (MS. 61) containing long passages from Books V, VI-IX of *The Excursion* reveal many abortive attempts to start this tale, which evidently was after W.'s heart:

- (a) But fixing now his eye  
 Upon a heap of turf that near him rose  
 The Priest resumed
- (b) Beneath this turf, this undistinguished Heap  
 Which a brief tablet of memorial words  
 Of warning and of pity well would grace
- (c) Yet unregarded thee I will not pass,  
 Thee, poor ill fated shepherd of Bield Crag  
 Who next dost meet me—Thou wert longer used  
 To range the Coves and Heights with different aim,  
 Far different thoughts, and thou didst perish there  
 —There was he doomed to breathe his latest breath:—  
 More hapless than the old Man whom we this day  
 Have given to the earth. But Arthur did not want  
 House of his own, and lands and numerous flock,  
 And wife and children to bewail his loss,  
 And a dumb Friend and Servant, in its kind  
 Loving as they, and marvellously true.  
 The Tale with all its moving incidents  
 Were long to tell—

The contrast drawn in lines 3-5 of (c) fits well with the story of Wilfred Armathwaite, *Exc.* vi. 1078-114.

Pieced together from the scattered sheets the whole tale reads as follows:

Nor unregarded may I pass thee by  
 Thee, poor ill-fated Shepherd of Bield Crag,  
 Who next doth meet me. Oft-times we are stopped  
 Wandering through antient churches among tombs  
 By sculptur'd image of the buried Man  
 Recumbent, Knight or Squire, with sword and shield  
 And, at his feet, armorial figure couch'd

Lion, or Greyhound, Lamb, or gentle Fawn,  
 The bold or timid creature, each alike  
 Resting in duteous quiet, without fear  
 Of the sword's point and unoffending spurs  
 That deck the Warrior in his last repose;  
 So in a just Tradition that will long  
 Preserve in our unvarying solitude  
 No weak remembrance of that sad event,  
 So have I sometimes wished that o'er this ground  
 Like Sculpture might be placed albeit rude  
 And by some rustic hand uncouthly wrought  
 A Shepherd imaged in his mountain garb  
 And at his side the serviceable staff  
 With which he lightly bounds from crag to crag,  
 And couchant like a pillow at the soles  
 Of his unarmed feet the faithful Dog  
 That loved his Lord and clung to him in death.  
 The Tale with all its moving Incidents  
 Were long to tell. Behold that smooth blue steep  
 That sinks abruptly from the grassless crown  
 Of yon huge height. The man who here is laid  
 Venturing along the brink of that sheer edge  
 To take his well-known way, in eager quest  
 Of some endangered straggler from his flock  
 Slipped in the turmoil of a winter's storm  
 And far beneath by next day's light was found  
 A wounded coarse with face toward the snow  
 And Raiment by that long precipitous fall  
 Torn from his back—and there was found his Dog  
 In mournful Posture o'er the naked part  
 Couching as if to shield it from the cold.  
 Thither with sorrowful and decent care  
 A Bier was brought, and underneath the bier  
 The afflicted Creature from the fatal spot  
 Walk'd with her Master's Body, nor withdrew  
 Nor quitted the forlorn society  
 Of those remains till weeping Friends had laid them  
 Beneath this turf.

Bield Crag is on the side of Lingmoor Fell, at the head of Little Langdale, named from the Bield Farm which lies at its foot. Mr. R. C. K. Ensor, to whom I read the poem, and who thereafter explored the crag, writes: "Bield Crag exactly fits Wordsworth's story. It has high black precipices below slippery sloping ledges . . . : at the foot of the precipices is a high screes almost equally steep. A body falling from above could easily roll some way down the screes, and be much torn in the process."

W. needed the story of a typical Shepherd to complete the Pastor's character-studies of his flock. Why did he never publish this moving tale? Another fragment reads:

To thy sad mishap  
A word shall be devoted for the sake  
Of a dumb Friend and servant who though weak  
To save was marvellously true.

Perhaps W. concluded that the tale bore too close a resemblance to that of Gough and his faithful dog, which he had already told in *Fidelity*, published in 1807 (Vol. IV, p. 80).

## BOOK VII

Drafts of most of this Book are found in a note-book (MS. 61) belonging, probably, to the years 1809-12; a few fragments are also extant, torn from another note-book (MS. 62) of the same period. An earlier version of ll. 242-91 forms part of *The Tuft of Primroses*, written in 1808 (v. note to iii. 367); v. also vii. 980-2 and note.

p. 231. 7-8. Snowdon . . . Cader Idris] In the summers of both 1791 and 1793 W. was staying in North Wales with his friend Robert Jones. For an account of his ascent of Snowdon v. *Prelude*, xiv.

31-3. (*app. crit.*) three contiguous vales . . . its own Compartment] The parish of Grasmere included three townships: (1) Grasmere, (2) Langdale, (3) Rydal, Loughrigg, and Ambleside (Above Stock): to each of these a part of the churchyard was assigned as burial ground.

36-7. encroaching On the smooth playground] At this time the Grasmere village school was in the building adjoining the lych-gate, and part of the churchyard was used as a school playground. v. *An Evening Walk*, *app. crit.* to A. 49-52 (Vol. I, p. 7).

38-291. "The Clergyman and his family described at the beginning of this [seventh] book were, during many years, our principal associates in the Vale of Grasmere, unless I were to except our very nearest neighbours. I have entered so particularly into the main points of their history, that I will barely testify in prose that—with the single exception of the particulars of their journey to Grasmere, which, however, was exactly copied from, in another instance—the whole that I have said of them is as faithful to the truth as words can make it. There was much talent in the family: the eldest son was distinguished for poetical talent, of which a specimen is given in my notes to the sonnets to the Duddon [Vol. III, p. 506]. Once, when in our cottage at Town End I was talking with him about poetry, in the course of conversation I presumed to find fault with the versification of Pope, of whom he was an enthusiastic admirer: he defended him with a warmth that indicated much irritation: nevertheless I would not abandon my point, and said, 'In compass and variety of sound

your own versification surpasses his.' Never shall I forget the change in his countenance and tone of voice: the storm was laid in a moment; he no longer disputed my judgment, and I passed immediately in his mind, no doubt, for as great a critic as ever lived. I ought to add, he was a clergyman and a well-educated man, and his verbal memory was the most remarkable of any Individual I have known, except a Mr. Archer, an Irishman, who lived several years in this neighbourhood, and who in this faculty, was a prodigy; he afterwards became deranged, and I fear continues so, if alive."—I. F. The Rev. Joseph Sympson, curate of Wytheburn for over fifty years, died at the age of 92 and was buried in Grasmere churchyard on July 2, 1807. His constant intercourse, and that of his family, with the W.s in their early years at Town End is attested on nearly every page of D. W.'s *Grasmere Journals*.

43. length of road] The road from Grasmere vale up to Dunmail Raise. The "cottage" (52), where the Sympsons lived, still known as Broadrain, is situated some 300 yards above the bridge over Tongue Ghyll; the "vale beyond" (57) is Wytheburn.

162. three fair children] Joseph Sympson had, in fact, six children, three boys and three girls. It will be noted that in the passage 241/2, omitted after 1820, mention is made of "three leaving home" to seek their fortune in the world, and of these the one, Bartholomew, who returned "to till his father's glebe", did not die before his father, as l. 260 would lead us to suppose, but lived till 1832. The youngest daughter, Elizabeth Jane, was 36 years of age when she married Julius Caesar Ibbetson, an artist, in Dec. 1803. She died in the following September, and her child three months later. Mrs. Sympson, who was eleven years younger than her husband, died in Jan. 1806.

242-91. A first version of this passage, quoted in the *app. crit.* as *T. of P.*, formed a part of *The Tuft of Primroses* (q.v., pp. 351-2). On the versos of the MS. of that poem are found portions of this first version as adapted for *The Excursion*, ending "Were gathered to each other", l. 291, after which is written "End of the Tale".

316-60. A priest] "Then follows the character of Robert Walker, for which see notes to the Duddon."—I. F. (v. Vol. III, p. 510).

343. held] I have adopted the reading of C, "held" for "borne" at the end of the line, a change made at the same time as W.'s revision of ll. 351-2, where "borne" is introduced at the end of l. 351: he clearly wished to avoid the repetitive effect.

395-481. "Then [follows the character of] the deaf man, whose epitaph may be seen in the churchyard at the head of Haweswater, and whose qualities of mind and heart, and their benign influence in conjunction with his privation, I had from his relatives on the spot."—I. F. W. used these lines to conclude his third essay *Upon Epitaphs*, written by him in 1809-10 for *The Friend*, but not published till 1876, when Grosart included it in the *Prose Works* (ii. 60-75). They were,

says W., "suggested by a concise epitaph which I met with some time ago in one of most retired vales among the mountains of Westmoreland. There is nothing in the detail of the poem which is not either founded upon the epitaph or gathered from inquiries concerning the deceased, made in the neighbourhood." The MS. readings quoted in *app. crit.* are from Grosart's transcript (the MS. is lost); in l. 467 Grosart has "cross" for "crag"—an obvious misreading of the MS.

482-536. "The blind man, next commemorated, was John Gough, of Kendal, a man known, far beyond this neighbourhood, for his talents and attainments in Natural History and Science."—I. F. John Gough (1757-1825) became blind at the age of 3, as a result of small-pox; but at 8 years old he began to study plants by touch, and he became a distinguished botanist. S. T. C. commemorates him in *Omniana*, 1812, under the heading "The Soul and its Organs of Sense": "The every way amiable and estimable John Gough of Kendal is not only an excellent mathematician, but an infallible botanist and zoologist. He has frequently at the first feel corrected the mistakes of the most experienced sportsmen with regard to the birds or vermin which they had killed. . . . As to plants and flowers, the rapidity of his touch appears fully equal to that of sight; and the accuracy greater. Good heavens! It needs only to look at him! Why his face sees all over! It is all one eye! I almost envied him; for the purity and excellence of his own nature, never broken in upon by those evil looks . . . with which low cunning, habitual cupidity, presumptuous sciolism, and heart-hardening vanity, caledonize the human face,—it is the mere stamp, the undisturbed *ectypon* of his own soul!" It is noteworthy that W. places him in the churchyard while he is still alive.

509-15. instinct with spirit] In his description of the blind man W. instinctively falls into Miltonic phraseology and rhythm; "instinct with spirit" is from *Paradise Lost*, vi. 752, "fancy and understanding" from *P.L.* v. 485, "stood abashed" from *P.L.* iv. 846; and cf. also Adam's eulogy of Eve, *P.L.* viii. 551-2, 557:

All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her  
Loses . . .

Greatness of mind and nobleness . . . create an awe.

536. married to immortal verse] *L'Allegro*, 137.

543. adown a rugged slope] There is no "rugged slope" with a "steep descent" near Grasmere churchyard; here, "as by the waving of a magic wand", the poet takes us back to the church in Langdale.

595-624. (*app. crit.*) the seasons' difference] *As You Like It*, II. i. 6.

617. That sycamore]

"This Sycamore oft musical with Bees;  
*Such Tents* the Patriarchs loved."

S. T. COLERIDGE.—W.

625-31. In a first version written on a stray sheet of MS. 62, W's description of the old woodman assumed that he was already dead:

At length when he had stood a hundred years  
 Firm as the finest Patriarch of the woods  
 Lusty and green in age yet with dry top  
(v. vii. 626 [app. crit.])  
 Hoary, but somewhat shrunken in the limbs,  
 Yet by mishap unscath'd, from weakness free  
 From all unsightly withering or decay,  
 Himself without a moment's warning fell.  
 Such and not seldom is the kindly end,  
 Of spriteful, temperate, and industrious Men  
 After long life among these healthy hills:  
 So have I seen on some mild day of March  
 When the bright sun was high in heaven refreshed  
 With growth of vernal power, a splendid Pile  
 Of ice and Icicles which lingering frost  
 Against the surface of an upright rock  
 In monumental shape serene and high  
 Had reared, and more than monumental lustre;  
 Meanwhile faint tricklings, as I gazed, were heard  
 A voice of melting, that in whispers sang  
 Of easy dissolution and decay  
 By presence and by influence of soft air  
 And flattering sunshine, when without a touch  
 Insensibly the total fabric fell  
 And spread a confused ruin at the feet  
 Of the bare rock whose wall it had adorn'd  
 But soon, while on the [frozen ?] ground it lies,  
 Soon to depart and wholly disappear—  
 Such was the bright decay (happy end) the sudden fate,  
 Of that old man, the oldest of the vale.

This passage must have been written earlier than the description of the old clergyman, ll. 111-291 *supra*, to whom W. transfers the distinction of being "the oldest of the vale", ll. 242-3. It is therefore earlier than 1808, the year in which the story of the Symptons was first written in *The Tuft of Primroses*, v. pp. 351-2 *supra*. For the image in the latter part of the passage cf. *Inscription*, xi. (Vol. IV, p. 204.)

632-95. "Of the Infant's Grave, next noticed, I will only say, it is an exact picture of what fell under my own observation; and all persons who are intimately acquainted with Cottage Life must often have observed like instances of the workings of the domestic affections."—I. F.

636-94. This refers to the Greens, an ancient and much respected

Grasmere family, who had lived for many generations at Pavement End at the head of the lake. The grandfather (l. 660) was John Green (1724-1806), and his wife's name was Margaret (l. 672). The father, another John Green (1758-1839), was a butcher, a man of integrity and much shrewdness. It was he who added on the rooms at Pavement End to accommodate his old parents (663-6). His sons, whether seven (636) or six (MS. 657), were notable men: two of them became parsons; one of them, Isaac, became master of Sedbergh School and was a close friend of Hartley Coleridge. Goldrill (637) was the name given by W. to the beck which runs past the farm at Pavement End into the lake; the name was suggested by the colour of the beck, stained by manure as it passed the farm. I owe the above information to Mrs. Rawnsley.

695-890. "This young volunteer bore the name of Dawson, and was younger brother, if I am not mistaken, to the Prodigal of whose character and fortunes an account is given towards the beginning of the preceding book. The Father of the family I knew well; he was a man of literary education and of experience in society much beyond what was common among the inhabitants of the Vale. He had lived a good while in the Highlands of Scotland, as a manager of ironworks at Bunaw, and had acted as clerk to one of my predecessors in the office of Distributor of Stamps, when he used to travel round the country collecting and bringing home the money due to Government in gold, which, it may be worth while to mention for the sake of my Friends, was deposited in the cell or Iron closet under the west window of the long room at Rydal Mount, which still exists with the Iron doors that guarded the property. This of course was before the time of bills and notes. The two sons of this person had no doubt been led by the knowledge of their Father to take more delight in scholarship, and had been accustomed in their own minds to take a wider view of social interests than was usual among their associates. The premature death of this gallant young man was much lamented, and, as an attendant at the funeral, I myself witnessed the ceremony and the effect of it as described in the Poem."—I. F. v. letter of D. W., July 19, 1807: "Many persons are dead . . . young George Dawson, the finest young man in the vale" (*E.L.*, p. 138).

695. On a bright day—so calm, so bright] Cf. Geo. Herbert, *Sunday*, "O Day, so calme, so bright"; and *Vertue*, "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright".

745. (*app. crit.*) A delightful description of the lakeland fox-hunt on foot, unfortunately not adopted in the text.

751. glead] "glede or gled, the kite, now chiefly *northern*" (*O.E.D.*).

782-801. (*app. crit.*) At Austerlitz (1805) Napoleon, by defeating the Russians and Austrians, gained possession of the central and southern German states, north Italy, and the coast of the Adriatic.

At Jena, on Oct. 14, 1806, he routed the Prussians and thirteen days later entered Berlin.

814-15. When grove was felled, *etc.*] The Book of Judges vi. 25-34.

848. all hoping and expecting all] 1 Corinthians xiii. 7.

923-75. Tradition tells . . . the house is gone] "The Pillars of the Gateway in front of the mansion remained when we first took up our abode at Grasmere. Two or three cottages still remain, which are called Knott-houses from the name of the gentleman (I have called him a knight) concerning whom these traditions survive. He was the ancestor of the Knott family, formerly considerable proprietors in the district."—I. F.

980-2. Perish the roses and the flowers of kings, *etc.*] The "Transit gloria mundi" is finely expressed in the Introduction to the Foundation-charters of some of the ancient Abbeys. Some expressions here used are taken from that of the Abbey of St. Mary's Furness, the translation of which is as follows:

"Considering every day the uncertainty of life, that the roses and flowers of Kings, Emperors, and Dukes, and the crowns and palms of all the great, wither and decay; and that all things, with an uninterrupted course, tend to dissolution and death: I therefore," *etc.*—W.

*v. Tuft of Primroses*, 357-9, Appendix C, p. 356, for an earlier version of these lines.

## BOOK VIII

There is no complete consecutive manuscript of this Book, but rough drafts of all but ll. 487-519 are extant in note-books (MSS. 61, 62) which probably date from 1809-12. An early version of ll. 283-305, 315-32 is also found in a note-book, MS. 18 A (which contains MS. D of *The Ruined Cottage*), in the hand of D. W., dating from 1798-9.

p. 267. 50. Cf. Milton's memorable line:

For not to irksome toil but to delight  
He made us. (*Paradise Lost*, ix. 242.)

87, *etc.* An inventive age, *etc.*] "What follows in the discourse of the Wanderer upon the changes he had witnessed in rural life, by the introduction of machinery, is truly described from what I myself saw during my boyhood and early youth, and from what was often told me by persons of this humble calling. Happily, most happily, for these mountains, the mischief was diverted from the banks of their beautiful streams, and transferred to open and flat countries abounding in coal, where the agency of steam was found much more effectual for carrying on those demoralising works. Had it not been for this invention, long before the present time every torrent and river in this district would have had its factory, large and populous in proportion to the power of the water that could there have been commanded. Parliament has interfered to prevent the night-work which was once

carried on in these mills as actively as during the daytime, and by necessity still more perniciously—a sad disgrace to the proprietors, and to the nation which could so long tolerate such unnatural proceedings. Reviewing at this late period, 1843, what I put into the mouths of my Interlocutors a few years after the commencement of the century, I grieve that so little progress has been made in diminishing the evils deplored, or promoting the benefits of education which the Wanderer anticipates. The results of Lord Ashley's labours to defer the time when Children might legally be allowed to work in factories, and his endeavours to limit still farther the hours of permitted labour, have fallen far short of his own humane wishes, and those of every benevolent and right-minded man who has carefully attended to this subject: and in the present session of Parliament (1843) Sir James Graham's attempt to establish a course of religious education among the children employed in factories has been abandoned, in consequence of what might easily be foreseen, the vehement and turbulent opposition of the Dissenters; so that, for many years to come, it may be thought expedient to leave the religious instruction of Children entirely in the hands of the several denominations of Christians in the Island, each body to work according to its own means and in its own way. Such is my own confidence, a confidence I share with many of my most valued friends, in the superior advantages, both religious and social, which attend a course of instruction presided over and guided by the Clergy of the Church of England that I have no doubt that, if but once its members, lay and clerical, were duly sensible of those benefits, their Church would daily gain ground, and rapidly, upon every shape and fashion of Dissent; and in that case, a great majority in Parliament being sensible of these benefits, the Ministers of the Country might be emboldened, were it necessary, to apply funds of the State to the support of Education on Church principles. Before I conclude, I cannot forbear noticing the strenuous efforts made at this time in Parliament, by so many persons, to extend manufacturing and commercial industry at the expense of agricultural, though we have recently had abundant proofs that the apprehensions expressed by the Wanderer were not groundless."—I. F.

100. thorpe and vill] Thorpe O.E. and M.E. for hamlet or village; vill O.F. for farm, country house, or village (*O.E.D.*).

111–12. Earth has lent Her waters, Air her breezes] In treating this subject, it was impossible not to recollect, with gratitude, the pleasing picture, which, in his Poem of the Fleece, the excellent and amiable Dyer has given of the influences of manufacturing industry upon the face of this Island. He wrote at a time when machinery was first beginning to be introduced, and his benevolent heart prompted him to augur from it nothing but good. Truth has compelled me to dwell upon the baneful effects arising out of an ill-regulated and excessive application of powers so admirable in themselves.—W.

The passage which follows was clearly suggested by the close of *The Fleece*, Book III, where Dyer describes the transport of wool not merely by road, but also

Through every navigable wave . . .  
 . . . through Tyne and Tees,  
 Through Weare and Lune and merchandising Hull,  
 And Swale and Aire, . . .  
 Through Ken, swift rolling down his rocky dale  
 Like giddy youth impetuous, . . .  
 Through Towy, winding under Merlin's towers  
 And Usk, that frequent under hoary rocks  
 On her deep waters paints the impending scene,  
 Wild torrents, crags and woods, and mountain snows. . . .  
 The northern Cambrians . . . lay their bales  
 In Salop's streets, beneath whose lofty walls  
 Pearly Sabrina waits them with her barks  
 And spreads the swelling sheet. For nowhere far  
 From some transparent river's naval course  
 Arise, and fall, our various hills and vales,  
 Nowhere far distant from the masted wharf.

and Dyer goes on to suggest the digging of a canal to join Thames, Severn, and Trent. Thomson had also celebrated the development, in his day, of roads and canals in England:

'Tis not for me to paint, diffusive shot  
 O'er fair extents of land, the shining road ;  
 The flood-compelling arch ; the long canal  
 Through mountains piercing and uniting seas.  
 (*Liberty*, v.)

W.'s lines 115-16 have given critics some difficulty, but he does not mean that the canal is necessarily high up on the mountain's side, only that it passes along the lofty slope of a mountain. He is perhaps thinking of the Kendal to Lancaster canal, of which the construction began shortly after 1792, which winds along through hilly country with magnificent views, in places, of Morecambe Bay and the Lakeland fells.

220. Call Archimedes from his buried tomb] "The hint for this description comes from Cicero (*Tusculan Disputations*, lv. 23) who says that when he was Quaestor in Sicily he found the tomb of Archimedes, buried in brambles, etc., and forgotten by the Syracusans themselves."—Nowell Smith.

283-7. (*app. crit.*) There is a law severe of penury] So begin the lines, headed "Fragment", towards the close of the note-book, MS. 18 A, into which D. W. copied *The Ruined Cottage* (MS. D, v. p. 404 *supra*), and *Adventures of Salisbury Plain*, etc. It corresponds with ll. 283-305, 315-32 of our text, and as there is a blank half-

page in the MS. after the line corresponding with 305, it is reasonable to suppose that a draft of 306-14 was also written at the same time, 1798-9, but that D. W. was unable to decipher it, and left the space to be filled in when she could consult her brother.

283. Economists will tell you] Compare W.'s reference to *The Wealth of Nations* in *Prelude*, xiii. 78 and *Humanity*, 58-63.

297-302. W. was perhaps drawn into a special interest in the evils of child-labour in factories by conversations with John Thelwall, who visited him at Alfoxden in 1797. Cf. Thelwall's lines quoted by Professor Harper:

the unwieldy pride  
Of Factory overgrown, when Opulence,  
Dispeopling the neat cottage, crowds his walls  
(Made pestilent by congregated lungs  
And lewd association) with a race  
Of infant slaves, brok'n timely to the yoke  
Of unremitting drudgery.

331. lapse of liquid element] Cf. note to iii. 93 *supra*.

389. vagrants of the gipsy tribe] Cf. *Gipsies*, Poems of the Imagination, xx, Vol. II, p. 226, for W.'s view of these "wild outcasts of society".

413. Christ-cross-row] "The alphabet, so called from the figure of the cross prefixed to it in hornbooks" (*O.E.D.*).

556-71. v. Shelley, *Peter Bell the Third*, 584-8, and Note.

## BOOK IX

There is no complete continuous manuscript of this Book, but nearly all of it is covered by drafts found in different note-books, MSS. 60, 61, 62, presumably dating from 1809-12. Lines 1-26, 128-52 are also found under the heading *Fragment* in the same note-book, MS. 18 A, 1798-9, as contains lines from Book VIII (v. note to ll. 283-7 *supra*). The relation of thought expressed in them to that of *Lines composed . . . above Tintern Abbey*, written about the same time, is obvious enough.

p. 288. 59. High peaks that bound the vale where now we are] This is more appropriate to Langdale than to Grasmere. But on the general topography of the poem v. I. F. note p. 375, *supra*.

87. the mighty stream of tendency] Hazlitt refers, in his essay on Malthus in *The Spirit of the Age*, to "the mighty stream of tendency" as Mr. Wordsworth in the cant of the day calls it". For the image of W.'s letter in reply to Mathetes in *The Friend*, 1809 (v. Vol. III, p. 35, ed. 1818), where he supports his conception of the progress of human nature towards perfection by the simile of a winding river. Hazlitt refers more than once to W.'s belief in the philosophical doctrine of necessity which, he suggests, he derived from Godwin:

v. *Examiner*, Aug. 21, 1814, which opens with a misquotation of *Lines composed above Tintern Abbey*, ll. 92-102,

For I have learnt

A sense sublime . . .

A motion and a spirit that impels

All thinking things, all objects of all thought

And rolls through all things,

and continues: "Perhaps the doctrine of philosophical necessity was never more finely expressed than in these lines"; and *Spirit of the Age*: essay on Godwin: "Throw aside your books of Chemistry," said W. to a student in the Temple, "and read Godwin on Necessity". For the "cant of the day" about "inevitable progress", "tendency" towards the state of perfection, etc., v. final chapter of Godwin's *Political Justice*, 1796. But W.'s phrase was his own; cf. fragment from the Alfoxden note-book quoted in notes to *The Prelude*, ed. E. de S., p. 548: "They rest upon their oars, Float down the mighty stream of tendency" (a description of the class of men to which the Wanderer belongs). The influence of a memorable passage in Burke's *Thoughts on the French Revolution* may perhaps be traced in both thought and image: "If a great change is to be made in human affairs, the minds of men will be fitted to it; the general opinions and feelings will draw that way. Every fear, every hope will forward it; and then they who persist in opposing *this mighty current in human affairs*, will appear rather to resist the decrees of Providence itself, than the mere designs of men." Cf. M. Arnold in *St. Paul and Protestantism*: "That stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being, and which, inasmuch as our idea of real welfare resolves itself into this fulfilment of the law of one's being, man rightly deems the fountain of all goodness, and calls by the worthiest and most solemn name he can, which is God, science also might willingly own for the fountain of all goodness, and call God."

114-15. wherever man is made . . . a tool, etc.] Cf. viii. 283 and note.

134. chalice] altered from "vessel", because Barron Field objected that the "vessel" was ambiguous, and that by "vessel" he understood a ship. In his Memoir (B.M. MS. Add. 41325-7) B. F. notes: I have never been able to find such a line: Shakspeare has "Fills the wide vessel of the Universe", *Henry V* (Chorus to Act IV), and the "big round tears" in *As You Like It*.

151. human form divine] *Paradise Lost*, iii. 44, "Human face divine".

152. (*app. crit.*) And their eternal soul may waste away] In the 1798-9 MS. (MS. 18 A) which contains the first version of 1-26 (*v. app. crit.*) and 128-52, and with no break between the first version of 27-128 (*v. app. crit.*) and 128-52, the passage concludes as follows:

Oh never was this intellectual power  
 This vital spirit, in its essence free  
 As is the light of heaven, this mind that streams  
 With emanations like the blessed sun  
 Oh never was this [     ] existence formed  
 For wishes that debilitate and die  
 Of their own weakness, fears that live by search  
 Of knowledge, which they cannot find, for hopes  
 That have no blessing in them, blind regrets  
 And such desires as do but stir the heart  
 To waken consciousnesses of despair,  
 For hesitations, pining languors, cold  
 And dead suppressions, all the subtle host  
 Of feverish infirmities that give  
 Sad motion to the pestilential calm  
 Of negative morality, and feed  
 From day to day their never-ending life  
 In the close prison-house of human laws.

195-8. I spake of mischief . . . destroy] "The Chartists are well aware of this possibility, and cling to it with an ardour and perseverance which nothing but wiser and more brotherly feeling towards the many, on the part of the wealthy few, can moderate or remove."—I. F.

226-8. It is worth noting that this passage was added in 1845 (v. note to i. 934-55).

296. (*app. crit.*) A saintly youth] i.e. Edward VI.

299. Binding herself by statute] The discovery of Dr. Bell affords marvellous facilities for carrying this into effect; and it is impossible to over-rate the benefit which might accrue to humanity from the universal application of this simple engine under an enlightened and conscientious government.—W.

Dr. Andrew Bell (1753-1832) published in 1797 *An Experiment in Education made at the Asylum of Madras*, in which he advocated the use of pupil teachers. W. read the book in 1808 and was much impressed by it (v. *M.Y.*, p. 245), and both Coleridge and Southey became enthusiastic supporters of Bell's "discovery". In 1811 and 1812 Bell spent some time in the Lake district, and became intimate with the Wordsworth family. Joseph Lancaster, a Quaker, in his *Improvements in Education* (1803) admitted his debt to Bell for his own monitorial system, but when he pressed for widely spread free education "on general Christian principles" his position as a Quaker aroused the fears of the Tory and Church party, who rallied round Bell as the advocate of Church schools.

336. Calpe] The classical name for Gibraltar. W. alludes here to the almost total subjugation of the Continent to Napoleon at this time. Cf. ll. 409-12.

363-4. the fear Of numbers] A reference to the theory of Thomas

Malthus (1766–1834) whose *Essay on Population* had appeared in 1798 and was widely read. Hazlitt published *A Reply to the Essay on Population* in 1807.

431. shy compeer] Cf. Satan's "bold compeer", *Paradise Lost*, i. 127.

437–48. A version of this passage, written in 1804, occurs in MS. Y of *The Prelude* (1805), viii. 496/7. v. *Prel.*, E. de S., p. 562.

484. on thy bosom, spacious Windermere] Cf. *Prelude*, ii. 54–7.

519. Vouchsafe sweet influence] A Miltonic phrase: cf. "shedding sweet influence": *Paradise Lost*, vii. 375; the use of "sweets" in 544 also recalls Milton.

530–1. A choice repast, etc.] Cf. Milton, Sonnet XVII, "What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice". Barron Field criticized the earlier reading as "too much in the vein of Scriblerus. This is what I call poetic diction, in your bad sense. I would say, 'Merrily seated in a ring, drank tea'." W. replied "Drank tea" is too familiar. My own line (I own) is somewhat too pompous, as you say. The line now stands, etc., as text. W. wrote this in 1828, but the correction was not made before 1837 ed.

590–633. This description of the sunset is, significantly, full of Miltonic phraseology: thus *the orb* (593) for the sun. v. *Paradise Lost*, *passim*; *blue firmament* (596), *P.L.* xi. 206; *unapparent fount* (605), cf. *P.L.* vii. 103; *effluence of thyself* (617), cf. *P.L.* iii. 6; *paternal splendours* (620), *paternal glory*, *P.L.* vii. 219; *frail earth* (625), *frail World*, *P.L.* ii. 1030; *empyreal throne* (631), *P.L.* ii. 430.

609. from the grassy mountain's open side] "The point here fixed upon in my imagination is half-way up the northern side of Loughrigg Fell, from which the Pastor and his companions are supposed to look upwards to the sky and mountain-tops, and round the Vale, with the lake lying immediately beneath them."—I. F.

690–711. Cf. *Prelude*, xiii. 329–35; and for his early interest in the Druids, *Vale of Esthwaite*, 32 (Vol. I, p. 270 and note p. 368), and *Guilt and Sorrow*, 122 and 185–98 *app. crit.* (Vol. I, p. 104 and note p. 336).

704. Taranis] "Taranis is the name of a Celtic God, probably 'the Thunderer', mentioned by Lucan, *Pharsalia*, i. 446: Et Taranis Scythicae non mitior ara Dianae."—Nowell Smith.

743–7. (*app. crit.*) Cf. the combination in *Paradise Lost*, vi. 645, of rocks, waters, woods.

750. They know if I be silent, morn or even] *Paradise Lost*, v. 202, "Witness if I be silent, morn or eeven".

775. welcome promise made] "When I reported this promise of the Solitary, and long after, it was my wish, and I might say intention, that we should resume our wanderings, and pass the Borders into his native country, where, as I hoped, he might witness, in the society of the Wanderer, some religious ceremony—a sacrament, say, in the open fields, or a preaching among the mountains—which, by recalling

to his mind the days of his early Childhood, when he had been present on such occasions in company with his Parents and nearest kindred, might have dissolved his heart into tenderness, and so done more towards restoring the Christian faith in which he had been educated, and, with that, contentedness and even cheerfulness of mind, than all that the Wanderer and Pastor, by their several effusions and addresses, had been able to effect. An issue like this was in my intentions. But, alas

“ ’Mid the wreck of is and was,  
Things incomplete and purposes betrayed  
Make sadder transits o’er thought’s optic glass  
Than noblest objects utterly decayed.”

[*Malham Cove*, 11–14].—I. F.

Rydal Mount, June 24, 1843.

St. John Baptist day.

#### APPENDIX A

p. 313. *THE RECLUSE*, Book I. The lines quoted in the *app. crit.* to 170–1, “Thrice hath the winter moon been filled with light”, etc., show that W. was at work on the first book of *The Recluse* in late March 1800: he and D. W. arrived in Grasmere to take up their abode in Dove Cottage on Dec. 21, 1799; the moon was full on Jan. 10, 1800, again on Feb. 9, and for the third time on March 10. The full moon was important to them, for they walked much by moonlight (v. D. W.’s *Journals*, *passim*, and her letter, *M. Y.*, p. 85 etc.). References in the poem all corroborate the date of composition as between February and April: “Two months unwearied of severest storm” (181); “Soon will peep forth the primrose (514); “melted hoar-frost” on “the bare twigs” (564); *app. crit.* 544–9; and note to 658–9. There are four extant MSS. A is an incomplete early draft, a fair copy chiefly in W.’s hand but with 49 lines in the middle transcribed by M. H. It begins with the 26 lines quoted in *app. crit.* 151/2, “We will be free”, etc. Its 27th line is l. 152 of D, the latest text; its 25th is numbered 215, which proves A to be a fragment of which the first 190 lines are lost. It comes to an end at l. 376 of D, which in A is numbered 467. R, an interleaved copy of part of Coleridge’s *Poems*, 1796, contains drafts, written by Wordsworth opposite to *Religious Musings*, of scattered passages, incorporated after revision, in *The Recluse*, Book I, and in *The Excursion*. It gives versions of *Recluse*, i. 427–539, 502–4 (*app. crit.* and note), 592–609, 532–642, 633–7, and the two stories *Recluse*, i. 383/4, afterwards used in *Exc.* vi.

B is the first complete text: it was probably written later in 1800. It begins as a fair copy transcribed by M. H. who writes to l. 383, including lines in *app. crit.* 383/4: on the versos—and this continues

323-5. hound . . . among the lonely woods His yell repeating] Cf. *An Evening Walk*, 378, "Or yell, in the deep woods, of lonely hound".

334. *bield*] a refuge or shelter; W. italicizes it because it is a dialect word only found in Scotland and the north of England.

502-4. (*app. crit.*) These lines close a passage in MS. R evidently intended for this book of *The Recluse*, but afterwards rewritten for *Exc. iv.* 332-72. The whole passage runs as follows:

Happy is he who lives to understand,  
 Observes, explores, to the end (for this) that he may find  
 The law and what it is and where begins  
 The union and disunion that which makes  
 Degree or kind in every shape of being  
 The constitution powers and faculties  
 And habits and enjoyments, that do assign  
 To every class its office and abode  
 Through all the mighty commonwealth of things  
 Up from the stone or plant to sovereign man.  
 Such converse, if but fervent, teaches love  
 For knowledge is delight and such delight  
 Is love, yet suited as it rather is  
 To thought and to the climbing Intellect,  
 It teaches less to love than to adore  
 If that be not indeed the highest love.  
 And yet a something to our Nature cleaves  
 Which is not satisfied with this, and he  
 Is still a happier Man who, for those heights  
 Of speculation not unfit, descends  
 At Nature's call to walk in humbler ways,  
 Hath individual objects of regard  
 Among the inferior kinds, not merely those  
 Which he may call his own and which depend  
 Upon his care, from which he also looks  
 For signs and tokens of a mutual bond,  
 But others far beyond his narrow sphere  
 Which for the very sake of love he loves,  
 And takes the after-knowledge as it comes.  
 Nor is it a mean praise of rural life  
 And solitude that they do favour most,  
 Most frequently call forth and best sustain  
 These mild and pure affections, and to me  
 How much do they endear the quietness  
 Of this sublime retirement. I begin  
 Already to inscribe upon my heart  
 A liking for the small grey horse that bears  
 The paralytic Man . . .

521. Owllet-crag] I cannot trace this as a local name: perhaps W. invented it.

543/4 (*app. crit.*) underplace] A word (not in *O.E.D.*) characteristic of W. *v. Prel.*, E. de S., p. 600, note on "underpresence".

654. a Stranger of our Father's house] John W., who was at Grasmere from Jan. to Sept. 1800.

658-9. Sisters . . . Brother of our hearts] Mary Hutchinson and her sisters; and Coleridge. Coleridge was with them shortly before April 11; and before April 4 Mary Hutchinson had been with them for three weeks (*v. letter of Lamb to Manning*, April 5, 1800, and *D. W. to R. W.*, *E.L.*, p. 242).

666. unproved delight] W. uses the phrase in *Prelude*, v. 493; cf. *L'Allegro*, 40, "In unproved pleasures free".

718-20. one . . . fronted multitudes in arms] A reminiscence of Abdiel in *Paradise Lost*, vi. 30:

who single has maintained  
Against revolted multitudes the cause  
Of truth, in word mightier than they in Arms

749-50. the hope to fill The heroic trumpet with the Muse's breath] Cf. *Prelude* (1805), i. 177-219.

## APPENDIX B

p. 340. I. Yet once again, *etc.*: Holograph preserved in The Pierpont Morgan Library in New York; perhaps written as early as 1795, when W. first conceived the poem about the old Cumberland Beggar. It seems to record his return to Cockermouth on his way to Whitehaven in 1794, after his visit to Windy Brow.

p. 340. II. *Fragments from the Alfoxden note-book*. This note-book, used by W. between Jan. 20 and March 5, 1798 (*v. Prel.*, E. de S., p. xxi) contains drafts of passages of *The Old Cumberland Beggar* and fragments of blank verse, some of which were afterwards worked into *The Prelude* or *The Ruined Cottage*.

p. 340. i. *There would he stand, etc.* An early sketch of an experience of the Pedlar of *The Ruined Cottage*, afterwards the Wanderer of *The Excursion*, an experience akin to those which W. ascribes to himself in *The Prelude*. Books I and II.

p. 340. ii. *Why is it we feel, etc.* This looks like the first draft of the passage afterwards developed in the long addendum to MS. B of *The Ruined Cottage* (*v. p. 400 supra*) and finally incorporated in *Exc.* iv. 1204 *et seq.*; *v. note*. Cf. also the passage quoted as "an overflow" from Nutting, *Prel.*, E. de S., pp. 592-4.

p. 340. iii. *Of unknown modes of being, etc.* Cf. *Prelude*, i. 391 *et seq.* and *Exc.* ix. 13-15.

p. 342. II. ix. *Where truth Like some fair fabric, etc.* These lines clearly recall the building of Satan's palace:

Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge  
Rose like an Exhalation to the sound  
Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet.

(*Paradise Lost*, i. 710-12.)

p. 342. III. *There was a spot, etc.* These lines are found on a rough sheet, and are followed, after a line drawn across the page, by *Prelude*, x. 270. Lines 1-11 (instrument) occur also in the *Alfoxden* note-book.

p. 342. IV. *Fragments from a note-book containing the first extant MS. of Christabel.* This note-book was evidently in use from the early months of 1798. Several of the fragments, like those in the *Alfoxden* note-book, are of interest as attempts to describe at first hand the experience, and the far-reaching effect upon his mind, of his intercourse with Nature. He is at pains on the one hand to make careful note of forms and images that appealed especially to his imagination through eye and ear (v. II. vii; III; IV. i) and on the other to record as closely as possible the inward state to which Nature led him through his senses.

p. 342. IV. i. *Thou issuest from a fissure, etc.* Cf. note to *Exc.* iii. 69-73.

p. 343. IV. ii. *The leaves stir not, etc.* Cf. *Prelude* (1805), iii. 539:

Hush'd meanwhile  
Was the undersoul, lock'd up in such a calm  
That not a leaf of the great nature stirr'd.

p. 343. IV. iii, and II. iv, p. 341. These fragments taken together record an experience which was of vital importance to W.'s poetic life. Its foundation is a scene of quiet beauty (the stillness is an essential element)—of which the images affect the poet with sensations of delight. His deeper consciousness is stirred, and the first phase is marked by the presence *within* his mind of the images as though they had passed from external to internal existence. v. IV. iii: "things that are without Live in our minds as in their native home." Cf. *Prelude* (1850), ii. 348-52:

What I saw  
Appeared like something in myself, a dream  
A prospect in the mind.

The second phase is the passing from a dreamlike consciousness of images into a deeper state in which "the mind is called Into itself, by image from without Unvisited", v. II. iv *supra*, and *Prelude* (1850), ii. 305-6:

an elevated mood, by form  
Or image unprofaned.

The pulse of physical life seems suspended:

I lived  
Without the knowledge that I lived (II. iv *supra*.)

From such a trance-like mood springs the mystic vision. Cf. *Lines . . . above Tintern Abbey*:

the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body and become a living soul,  
While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony and the deep power of joy  
We see into the life of things.

p. 343. IV. iv. 3-5. The ear hears not, *etc.*] A significant tribute to the ear as that among the senses which has the most spiritual function.

p. 343. IV. vi. *There is creation in the eye, etc.*

6. godlike faculties] Cf. fragment IV. vii. 12, "the godlike senses". One of the difficult paradoxes in W.'s thought is this: he knew the power of the senses to lead the mind straight into the spiritual intuition of life; and he also knew the "despotic" power of the senses to shut off the mind from the deeper experience, cf. *Exc.* iv. 207 "domineering faculties of sense". (He thought the eye "the most despotic of the senses", v. *Prelude*, xii. 128 ff.). Contrast the MS. readings *Ode, Intimations of Immortality*, 191/2 *app. crit.*:

*Divine indeed of sense  
A blessed influence*

and 153/4 (*app. crit.*):

But for those first affections  
Those shadowy recollections  
Which be they what they may  
Throw off from us, or mitigate the spell  
Of that strong frame of sense in which we dwell

He was continually conscious of "the incumbent mystery of sense and soul", *Prelude*, xiv. 286. Imagination is the saving power. "Higher minds," he says, those which penetrate by imagination, are

By sensible impressions not enthralled,  
But by their quickening impulse made more prompt  
To hold fit converse with the spiritual world.

(*Prelude*, xiv. 90-108).

Cf. note to *Prelude*, E. de S., iv. 345, p. 524.

9-12. Cf. Coleridge, *The Nightingale a Conversation Poem*, ll. 24-9:

Poet who had been building up the rhyme  
When he had better far have stretched his limbs  
Beside a brook in mossy forest-dell,  
By sun or moonlight, to the influxes  
Of shapes and sounds and shifting elements  
Surrendering his whole spirit . . .

Coleridge learnt this lesson from W., whose experience, however, went farther and deeper.

12-23. Cf. *Prelude*, ii. 315 *et seq.*; and Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, 1800: "Poetry . . . takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity; the emotion is contemplated till, by a species of reaction, the tranquillity gradually disappears, and an emotion kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation is gradually produced and does itself actually exist in the mind."

p. 344. IV. ix. *For let the impediment, etc.* Also found in the notebook from which the next two passages are taken. It is obviously connected with *Prelude* (1805), xii. 194-201.

p. 344. V. i. *There are who tell us, etc.* An early draft of the passage first printed in *Prelude* (1805), v. 370-88.

p. 347. VII. i. Clearly intended for *The Prelude*.

p. 347. VII. ii. Perhaps intended for *The Recluse*: v. ll. 79-97, and the end of the passage from MS. B in *app. crit.* 70-9.

p. 347. VII. iii and iv. K. has arranged these lines in four separate groups, ending the first group at "sole proprietor", and beginning the second with the line "A moon among her stars, a mighty vale". His third group begins with the line "A multitude of little rocky hills", and his fourth with "Embowering mountains and the dome of Heaven". I conjecture that the lines *To the Evening Star over Grasmere Water* (dated by K. 1806, probably a mistake for 1800) ends at "stars" in l. 5, and that a new group of lines begins with "A mighty vale", this passage with the third and fourth of K.'s groups being in reality jottings for the description of Grasmere, *Recluse*, i. 117-28, in which one of the lines, "The multitude of little rocky hills", appears intact. I have therefore rearranged the lines on this understanding.

p. 347. VII. iv. 2-3. Cf. D. W.'s *Journal*, May 1, 1802: "Oh the overwhelming beauty of the vale below, greener than green."

6. I find it difficult to make sense of "lonely there"—perhaps wrongly transcribed.

## APPENDIX C

p. 348. THE TUFT OF PRIMROSES. These incomplete and discursive verses were written in the spring of 1808. The MS., in W.'s writing throughout, is preserved in an octavo note-book,<sup>1</sup> bound in marble boards, which also contains an early draft of the *Address to the Clouds* and the poem, not published by W., on *A Vision of St. Paul's*, which he described in a letter to Sir G. Beaumont dated April 8, 1808 (v. Vol. iv, p. 374). Internal evidence confirming the date is afforded by the fact that Mr. Sympson had died on June 27, 1807, during the absence of the W.s at Coleorton (v. ll. 143-85), that on July 19 of that

<sup>1</sup> An earlier draft of ll. 1-82 is also found on the reverse of some pages of the first MS. of *Peter Bell*, along with a draft of *Address to the Clouds* and *A vision of St. Paul's*: I refer to this as MS. A.

year D. W. had written to Mrs. Clarkson of the grief they had all felt on their return to Grasmere at the removal of the firs and sycamore near the church (ll. 81-109; *v. M.Y.*, p. 138); and that in March and April of 1808 the W.s were seriously alarmed at Sara Hutchinson's state of health (*v. ll.* 37-48 and *M.Y.*, pp. 177, 185, 201). The poem thus belongs to the interval between 1806 and 1809, when W. let *The Excursion* rest; and two passages from it (ll. 143-85, 265-96) were later developed for insertion in the longer work. The passage relating to the Chartreuse, ll. 510-71 corresponding to *Prelude*, vi. 424-71, which is almost free from correction in the MS., seems to have been copied in from another MS., but it will be noted that the lines were not found in the original *Prelude*; and they were probably first written for this poem, and only adapted for *The Prelude* when W. gave up the idea of completing or publishing *The Tuft of Primroses*. Our MS. has been copiously revised, and, as W. has often left two versions of the same passage undeleted, it is not always clear which he had decided to retain. My *app. crit.* only gives the more interesting of the variants.

7-19. The "Thou", "Thou art", and "thy" which occur in these lines have in most cases been altered in the MS. to "she", "she is", and "her", but as this change has not been carried farther into the poem, and even in these lines is not invariable, I have retained the original reading. The variants to 1-2, 4-7, quoted in the *app. crit.*, are obviously a part of this contemplated change from the second to the third person.

75. John W. had perished in 1805. From 1806 onwards S. T. C.'s gradual estrangement was felt. *v. A Complaint*, Vol. II, p. 34 and note p. 473.

104. blanc] The Miltonic spelling; *v. Paradise Lost*, iii. 48.

143-85. This is the first version of the story of the Sympsons, told in *Exc.* vii. 242-91. On the reverse of two pages of the MS. is found its first adaptation to *The Excursion*.

165. Emma] i.e. D. W.

265-96. Cf. *Exc.* iii. 367-405 and note.

297. St. Basil] A famous scholar and theologian of the fourth century. Born at Cesarea in A.D. 329, he studied first at Constantinople, then at Athens. After this he retired to a chosen spot in wild mountain country near Annesi in Pontus, where he began to organize a monastery on the lines of the cenobium or common life.

308. his Sister's voice] Basil's brother, Gregory of Nyssa, in his *Life of Macrina* says that it was his sister Macrina's persuasion and example which led Basil to devote himself to a life of self-denial.

319-425. This description of the Pontic solitude and Basil's appeal to Gregory Nazianzen are drawn from Basil's Letter XIV to Gregory his Friend (*v. Library of Nicene Fathers*, New Series, 8, St. Basil). The translation by Newman is as follows:

" . . . I must at once make for Pontus, where perhaps, God willing, I may make an end of wandering. After renouncing, with trouble, the idle hopes which I once had about you . . . I departed into Pontus in quest of a place to live in. There God has opened on me a spot exactly answering to my taste, so that I actually see before my eyes what I have often pictured to my mind in idle fancy. There is a lofty mountain covered with thick woods, watered towards the North with cool and transparent streams. A plain lies beneath, enriched by waters which are ever draining off from it, and skirted by a spontaneous profusion of trees almost thick enough to be a fence. . . . Indeed it is like an island, enclosed as it is on all sides; for deep hollows cut off 2 sides of it; the river, which has lately fallen down a precipice runs all along the front and is impassable as a wall; whilst the mountain extending itself behind, and meeting the hollows in a crescent, stops up the path at its roots. There is but one pass, and I am master of it. Behind my abode there is another gorge, rising into a ledge up above, so as to command the extent of the plains and the stream which bounds it which is not less beautiful to my taste than the Strymon as seen from Amphipolis. For while the latter flows leisurely . . . and is too still to be a river, the former is the most rapid stream I know, and somewhat turbid too from the rocks just above, from which, shooting down, and eddying in a deep pool, it forms a most pleasant scene for myself or anyone else, and is an inexhaustible resource to the country people, in the countless fish which its depths contain. What need to tell of the exhalations from the earth, or the breezes from the river? Another might admire the multitude of flowers and singing birds; but leisure I have none for such thoughts. However the chief praise of the place is, that being happily disposed for produce of every kind, it nurtures what to me is the sweetest produce of all, quietness; indeed it is not only rid of the hustle of the city, but is even unfrequented by travellers, except a chance hunter. It abounds indeed in game, as well as other things, but not, I am glad to say, in bears or wolves, such as you have, but in deer, and wild goats, and hares and the like."

350. Nazianzen] W. had the works of Nazianzen in his library at Rydal Mount: *Gregorii, D. (A. C. 37) Cognomento Theologi Episcopi Nazanzeni Opera*. 1522.

357-9. the Roses and the flowers of kings, etc.] Cf. *Exc.* vii. 980-2 and W.'s note.

373-4. These lines contain obvious Miltonic echoes. Cf. *Paradise Lost*, i. 743, "from Noon to dewy Eve", and *Lycidas*, 178-9;

There entertain him all the saints above  
In solemn troops and sweet societies

426-31. And Nazianzen fashioned a reply] Gregory's reply is his Epistle IV, in which he gives a satirically exaggerated account of the

gloom and discomfort of the place, ending "This then is what I think of those Fortunate Islands and of you happy people".

436. Amphilocheius] Bishop of Iconium in the fourth century, regarded as the foremost man in the Eastern Church after his friends, Basil of Cesarea, and Gregory of Nazianzus. Basil addresses him in his *De Spiritu Sancto* as "his brother Amphilocheius, his dear friend most honoured of all" (v. *Saint Basil*, by W. K. Lowther Clarke).

451-5. In 359 St. Basil was called away from his Pontic solitude to take part in an important Council at Constantinople. This was a period of strife and confusion in the Church through the prolonged doctrinal battle initiated by the Arian heresy. In 370 he was made Bishop of Cesarea.

510-71. *Prelude*, vi. 424-71.

520-9. Cf. *Descriptive Sketches* (1793), ll. 53-79, a first version of W.'s impressions of the Chartreuse on his visit in 1790.

#### ADDENDUM

p. 362. These lines, hitherto unpublished, are written in Wordsworth's early hand on the blank front page of a copy of *Paradise Lost* which is inscribed in the same hand *Wordsworth, Cambridge*. He must have given the copy later to his wife, for she has written her name, Mary Wordsworth, and the date August 27, 1822, under Wordsworth's name. On her death her two sons gave the book to Dr. John Davy with the following dedication inscribed on the verso of the title-page: "This copy of *Paradise Lost*, belonging to William Wordsworth when at College, is presented to Dr. Davy, as a Memorial of the Love of William and Mary Wordsworth, and of their long Friendship—Also, as an acknowledgement, from their Sons, of his most affectionate attention during the last illnesses of their beloved Parents.

John Wordsworth	Rydal Mount
Wm. Wordsworth	17th Jany. 1859."

The book is now in my possession, and will be given to Dove Cottage.

The lines breathe the spirit of his later allusions to Milton and his poetry: "the Bard, Holiest of Men" (MS. reading of Prospectus to *The Excursion*, 24-5), "that mighty orb of song, The divine Milton" (*Exc.* i. 249), "those trumpet-tones of harmony that shake Our shores in England" (*Prelude*, v. 205-6). Cf. note to *Exc.* i. 248-50.—H. D.

# CORRIGENDA AND ADDENDA

## VOL. I

- p. 10, *app. crit.*: 4th and 2nd line from bottom for Bandusia, Bandusian read Blandusia, Blandusian
- p. 12, *app. crit.*: after l. 127 . . . insert between ll. 8 and 9: Blest are those spirits tremblingly awake
- p. 27, *app. crit.*, l. 9: for charmed read charnel
- p. 51, *app. crit.*, A. 138: for where read when 139: for as read 'tis
- p. 226, I, l. 4: for it is read is it
- pp. 232-3, *app. crit.*: for so 1836 in each place, except l. 21, read so 1845; and for 1807-15 read 1807-15, 1836-43: at l. 21 read so 1840; and so 1836 but spoke for spake
- p. 236, X, read [Composed and Published 1798.]
- p. 263, IV, l. 7: for waters read water. l. 11: for True time read True, true
- p. 264, first line on page: for wave read waves
- p. 270, l. 3: for Hark . . . Hark read Lark . . . Lark
- p. 275, l. 242: for woods read wind's
- p. 321, l. 28: for A. 155 read A. 85
- p. 324, footnote: for pp. read ll.
- p. 329, l. 5: for III read VII
- p. 330, 15 lines from bottom: for xxxvii-1 read xxxviii-1
- p. 341, l. 15: for l. 30 read l. 630
- p. 362, 14 lines from bottom: after p. 238 insert XI
- p. 363, l. 10: after p. 241 for XI read XII
- p. 365, at beginning of l. 17: insert XIX *The Poet's Dream*
- p. 367, l. 15: after *Beauty and Moonlight* insert the original from which S.T.C. developed *Lewti*, v. *infra*, Vol. II, p. 531; and l. 27, for iii read iv; and 4 lines from bottom of page for 40 read 4
- p. 369, l. 8: for 79 read 75
- p. 371, 6 lines from bottom of page: after some French stanzas signed Anon. insert *L'education de l'Amour*, by Vicomte de Segur (v. article by Christensen, *M.L.N.* Vol. LIII. 280)
- p. 374, l. 1: for 247 read 147

## VOL. II

- p. 8, l. 255 of text: for steps. read steps,
- p. 17: indent l. 95
- p. 27, l. 51: read listlessness .
- p. 52, l. 42: delete comma after worse
- p. 65, *app. crit.*: for 1845 read 1840
- p. 87, *app. crit.*, l. 207: after 1802-5 add and cancel leaf 1800 but household
- p. 128: There should be no space between lines 11 and 12

- p. 135, *app. crit.*: 7-8 read so 1807-32, 1840
- p. 154: XX read [Composed 1842.—
- p. 198, l. 30: read Beholds
- p. 209. Airey Force Valley. read [Composed Sept. 1835.—
- p. 250, l. 36: for soil read spoil
- p. 264, l. 14 (7th line on the page): after seem'st insert now
- p. 385, footnote 1: read a greater number
- p. 409: for footnote 2 substitute, i.e. to the Preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads*, v. W.'s *Poetical Works*, ed. 1836-7, Vol. III, p. 315. In 1815 The Essay Supplementary opens with a paragraph never reprinted referring to the 'senseless outcry which has been raised against these poems and their author'.
- p. 432, insert footnote to l. 12: for human read common: emendation of N. C. Smith
- p. 474, l. 17: for Monkouse read Monkhouse
- p. 501, third line from bottom: read foundrous] The word is in the *O.E.D.* under founderous (cf 'founderous passages' in W.'s Letter to a friend of R. Burns): the *Dialect Dictionary*, &c.

## VOL. III

- p. 133, XVIII: read [Composed 1810.—
- p. 195, l. 37: read upon solemn [*del.* the]
- p. 283, third line: read Wife!
- p. 361, *app. crit.*, I, 1-6, 23rd line: for perceive read preserve
- p. 362, *app. crit.*, II, 1-14, l. 3: for also read else
- p. 431, three lines from bottom: for Thurson read Thomson
- p. 436, two lines from bottom, p. 54, XXXI: Lo! where she stands, &c., insert Sara Coleridge has written 'Dora Wordsworth' under this Sonnet in her copy of W.'s Poems, 1840.
- p. 484, l. 12: for 189 read 223
- p. 493, l. 5: for Marmetine and Marmctinus read Mamertine and Mamertinus
- p. 501, before l. 7: In its published form, &c., insert: A draft of the sonnet in Longman MS. supplies the eleventh line: And do not that way turn thine arm severe;
- p. 565, l. 15: for Chichester read Chicheley
- p. 569, l. 17: for Ardworth read Cudworth
- p. 573, l. 21: for unpractical read unpoetical

## VOL. IV

- p. 35, *app. crit.*, 8-9: read such (l.c.)
- p. 81, *app. crit.*, 40: read so 1815: Sad sight! the Shepherd, &c.
- p. 135, *app. crit.*: read pass'd]
- p. 150, *app. crit.*: for 274-5 read 274-7
- p. 274, l. 61: for Burnt read Burned
- p. 473, l. 11: for translations read stanzas translated

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